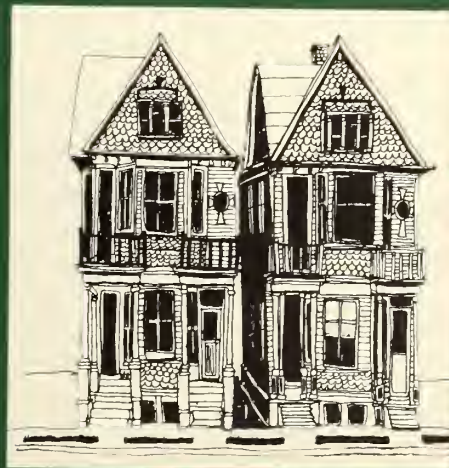


How Small Grants Make a Difference

Examples from the Design Arts Program

National Endowment for the Arts



Distributed by Partners for Livable Places, a coalition of organizations and individuals whose concerns for livability and quality in the built environment are reflected in this book. The Partners for Livable Places is a not-for-profit organization partially funded by the National Endowment for the Arts.

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How Small Grants Make a Difference

Prepared for the
Design Arts Program

National Endowment for the Arts

by Pamela Baldwin



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Preface

On August 3 and 4, 1977, the U.S. House of Representatives' Subcommittee on the City held hearings on "Livable Cities: How Small Grants Programs Can Make a Difference." The subcommittee heard witnesses from eight communities who described how small grants from the National Endowment for the Arts had significantly aided their efforts to improve urban neighborhoods and revitalize older downtowns.

A little money was made to go a long way. Support by the Endowment enabled these groups to think through their projects before they were launched, and made it easier for them to raise money from other sources once they had had a chance to show their seriousness of purpose.

The accomplishments of the Endowment's grantees are a good example of how a Federal agency can help urban communities to help themselves, when it keeps red tape to a minimum, encourages community initiative, and is sensitive to local conditions and willing to take risks.

I am pleased that the Endowment has decided to publish this pamphlet, which features the projects presented in testimony before the subcommittee.

Henry S. Reuss

Introduction

What makes a “livable” city? What makes a city or town a place where people enjoy being and where they take pride in their community? Answers to this question range as widely as the variety of cities and towns themselves. For some, a livable city is one where temperatures stay above freezing all year, and sunshine invites outdoor recreation. For others, a wealth of good restaurants (preferably open all night long) is required. Some urban dwellers cite attractive green parks as the features they like best in town, while still others speak of the local art museum, the symphony orchestra or the university.

Virtually everyone can agree that the perfect city, if it existed, would meet certain universal requirements. The city would have a viable economy, offering its residents the opportunity to earn a living. City-dwellers could move about the community with relative convenience and freedom from fear. The urban environment would be healthful and clean. Smaller communities within the city—neighborhoods—would offer a feeling of belonging, a community of families and individuals who knew and cared about each other. Basic services would be available—decent schools, health care facilities, emergency help, trash collection. The cost of living would remain within the bounds of manageability for even the lowest-paid residents. The city would be pleasant to look at—not just around the places tourists visit, but in the areas known only to those who live there. And finally, the city’s heritage, the architecture, written records and works of art that tell the story of its evolution, would be known, appreciated and protected from callous destruction.

That is the ideal. Too often, when we compare this image with the real condition of our cities, the discrepancy is so great that we despair of our ability to provide even the minimum conditions for livable places. When crime rises, schools fail, jobs disappear, buildings deteriorate, grime accumulates and people lose heart, where do we begin? How can we possibly tackle all these problems simultaneously, with limited resources, and make any difference? Why have past efforts, costing billions of dollars, failed so miserably? Where does the ultimate responsibility for our cities and towns lie—with the federal government, the states, or the municipalities themselves? Is it with government at all, or with private individuals, businesses and organizations?

The National Endowment for the Arts has chosen to approach the problems of the cities with the idea that small efforts *can* make a difference, and the record produced over several years’ experience with a small Endowment grant program bears this out. Perhaps the old saying that “necessity is the mother of invention” applies here. Certainly, the Arts Endowment would not have been in a position to invest millions upon millions in urban projects in any case. But within its funding limitations, the Endowment has chosen to concentrate on areas where it could help most, on projects that have grown out of indigenous spirit and captured the imaginations of those in a position to implement them. Typically, Endowment grants for city-related design and planning activities have provided the all-important link between an idea’s early conceptualization and its actual implementation; they have made detailed planning possible.

This publication describes a number of specific cases in which Endowment grants have made a difference in America’s cities. Beginning with the premise that the arts can play an important role in creating livable cities, the Endowment’s urban grants programs—administered through its Design Arts Program—have concentrated from the beginning on the creation or enhancement of urban amenities. “We seek to encourage people to dream about their cities, to think before they build, not after; to consider the alternatives before

they tear down," says Liv Biddle, Chairman of the Arts Endowment.

Much more than "beautification" is involved in Endowment-sponsored urban programs. Always, the relationship between the specific design project at hand and the larger issues of urban life—economics, jobs, even the city's very survival—is kept in mind by administrators and grantees alike. In awarding grants, the Arts Endowment has always looked for ideas that reflect creativity, attract broad community support, and appear promising for implementation.

On the other hand, since each community can best choose the vision it wishes to pursue, the Endowment does not require applicants to follow specific detailed guidelines. Those seeking funding are asked to explain simply and clearly, on a one-page form, the projects they wish to undertake. Community support must be demonstrated with written endorsements and through the even more tangible evidence of funds from other sources to match the Endowment's contribution.

The Design Arts Program began awarding grants in 1967; since then, over 1,200 individuals and organizations have received more than \$14 million in grants. "City Edges," the initial urban-theme grant program, was inaugurated in 1973. As its name suggested, that first program focused on the edges of urban settlements, whether literally at their political boundaries, or on waterfronts, in transitional areas between different sections of cities, or even—in the case of one imaginative New York City project—on its rooftops.

The second thematic approach was called "City Options," and encouraged a broad range of efforts to nurture the cultural and human environment in cities. That program evolved in turn into "Cityscale," which concentrated on the little things that make a city pleasant—the design of signs, street lighting, benches, and the like. For the Bicentennial Year, the Arts Endowment added a grant category called American Architectural Heritage. Under that program, matching grants totalling half a million dollars aided planning for 37 projects to revitalize older neighborhoods and downtown commercial districts in American cities and towns. The Bicentennial grant program reflected the nation's growing interest in neighborhood conservation, a field the Endowment had already supported by co-sponsoring a major conference in the fall of 1975. Finally, with fiscal year 1978, all these programs were synthesized into a comprehensive approach called "Livable Cities," for that was the common theme of them all. The theme programs will be phased out by 1980, and replaced by more general granting categories which will support the Program's long-term commitment to design research, design communications, and design demonstrations.

By Federal standards, all grants made under the Endowment's urban programs have been small; no stipend has exceeded \$50,000, and the average is some \$22,000. It is all the more remarkable, then, that the projects they helped fund have generated millions of dollars in private investment and government or foundation grants, and that the plans developed with Endowment funds have been translated into reality in many cases. This volume tells the stories behind a few of those successes. The accounts follow two general lines—first, enhancing life in neighborhoods (through physical restoration in some cases, simply by encouraging awareness of existing amenities in others), and second, improving downtowns, the commercial and industrial foundations of communities.

Several communities—Galveston, Texas; Savannah, Georgia; Troy, New York; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and Fernandina Beach, Florida—have used Endowment grants to carry out projects in historic preservation and adaptive re-use of older buildings. In none of these cities did preservation aim at a museum-like product designed only for tourists and school-children's field trips. Rather, the efforts described all sought to integrate preservation into the contemporary vitality of the community, to use the properties preserved as means

of providing for people's real needs ranging from jobs to housing to shopping. These examples demonstrate that the historic preservation movement in the United States has matured and proven its importance, thanks to imaginative groups like the Savannah Landmarks Rehabilitation Project, the Galveston Historical Society and Galveston County Cultural Arts Council, and many others—including the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The Trust was a frequent funding partner with the Endowment in the urban grants projects described here.

Grantees have also proven that arts and amenities are not luxuries sought and appreciated only by an elite few. People of all economic, social and racial groups have benefitted from Endowment-funded projects. In Jersey City, tenants in a public housing project found new pride in the upkeep of their homes, helped by an active tenant organization and an Endowment-funded artistic project that brightened their previously-deary halls. In Roxbury, Massachusetts, black residents learned about the proud history of their neighborhoods and forebears and mobilized to save some historic neighborhood architectural symbols. Spanish-speaking residents of Milwaukee, Wisconsin grew more aware of the architectural heritage and the sound stability of their section of the city. And in Savannah, a large-scale neighborhood restoration project was carefully designed to avoid resident displacement and improve the quality of housing for low-income families.

In her classic study of American cities, sociologist Jane Jacobs noted, "Vital cities have marvelous innate abilities for understanding, communicating, contriving and inventing what is required to combat their difficulties." That thought conveys the underlying philosophy of the National Endowment for the Arts' Livable Cities granting category. The imagination and invention come from the local citizens and their government, not from Washington. The Arts Endowment is proud of its ability to help, but remains mindful that the solutions to the problems will come from the cities and communities themselves.

Michael John Pittas
Director
Design Arts Program
National Endowment for the Arts

Neighborhoods





Pittsburgh

We believe that a city can be a work of art, constantly recreated each moment of each day as one of the most intricate and potentially beautiful of human constructions. The architecture of the city can symbolize that. Yet, the city is not a museum piece; it must survive on economics as well as pleasurable human interplay.

Arthur P. Ziegler, Jr., President
Pittsburgh History &
Landmarks Foundation

P

ittsburgh's past—manifest in so many of its finer buildings—naturally occupies the time and attention of the Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation. Not so readily expected is the Foundation's sensitive concern for the living city of today—its economy, its cultural life, its physical environment, and above all, its people. Through careful use of limited financial resources, the History and Landmarks Foundation has melded its two interests into an active program of historic preservation and urban revitalization that has begun to make a substantial mark on the face of contemporary Pittsburgh.

The National Endowment for the Arts supports the Foundation's efforts with enthusiasm and takes pride in noting how small grants, matched with funds from other sources and infused with hard work from dedicated community leaders, have sparked large projects whose ripple effects far exceed early expectations.

The Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation educates the public about the city's heritage through publications, lectures, tours, scholarly studies and cooperative programs with the public schools. The Foundation works with planners, city government officials and building owners to restore important structures, sometimes by purchasing them. Where it cannot save a whole building, it often manages to retrieve the bits and pieces of architectural detail which characterize important styles, so that they may be reused or at least remembered through museum display.

Since its founding in 1964, Landmarks has sponsored or assisted in restoration projects involving investments of \$68 million. Recently the Foundation began a massive effort involving a mixture of new construction and restoration of terminal and warehouse buildings previously used by the Pittsburgh and Lake Erie Railroad. On completion, the Station Square complex will provide a hotel, a large assortment of retail shops, 350,000 square feet of office space, restaurants and entertainment opportunities, a residential community of over 1,000 rental and condominium apartments, and such amenities as a marina, a park, an outdoor marketplace and a variety of industrial and transportation artifacts like historic trolley cars.

Demolition. The project looks like success even before completion. The path which led to Station Square has, however, known setbacks and failures as well; in fact, these early experiences may have been a necessary part of the Foundation's maturation. Earlier efforts to save another railroad building provided important lessons in the realities of urban economics although those who sought its restoration were left disappointed. That building—a Baltimore and Ohio warehouse—was the object of the National Endowment for the Arts' first grant to the Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation, awarded in 1973.

The Landmarks Foundation learned two things from that first Endowment-



funded study—first, that although historic preservation often aids urban revitalization, successes in that goal depends on a balanced economic equation; second, that objective research often leads to conclusions that contradict the hopes and preconceptions with which a study begins.

Noting the successful conversion of derelict commercial and industrial buildings to modern uses in other cities, the Foundation had looked for a way to do the same with the river-front railroad warehouse in Pittsburgh. The organization's restoration expert reported hopefully, "One has only to think how similar structures—the even more intractable cannery in San Francisco or the Cotton Wharves at Savannah—have been transformed into glamorous shopping arcades, vaulted restaurants, and quasi-marine pleasurelands, to envision a similar metamorphosis here."

The Baltimore & Ohio warehouse, built between 1913 and 1917, had never brought architectural pilgrims to view its beauty. Even so, it was, in the words of the Foundation's research director, "one of the most brutal and yet the most handsome buildings in Pittsburgh . . . a real document of Pittsburgh architectural brawn." The first two stories, raised in 1913, were of steel, while the upper five floors added in 1917 represented an early application of reinforced concrete technology. The building's facade was especially interesting because of classical cornices and pediments that softened its concrete "bones." "It is just this contrast, this ambiguity," said a Pittsburgh History and Landmarks report to the Endowment, "that constitutes so enormously the architectural interest of the building."

The Foundation hoped to transform the railroad building into a lively center of shops, restaurants, indoor parking, and apartment residences for 127 households. If successful, the project might ward off the bulldozers of the city's Urban Redevelopment Authority and begin a chain reaction of revitalization in the surrounding neighborhood of warehouses, lofts, filling stations and railroad tracks.

With only \$3,800 of the Endowment's funds and \$5,000 added from other sources, a team of architects, engineers and economists put together by the History and Landmarks Foundation studied the B & O railroad building's structural soundness, fitness for reuse, and potential return on investment. The Foundation's view, from the outset, was that the renovation project must prove justifiable on a "market basis"—that is, without special subsidies or grants to shore up a shaky investment.

At the end of the 13-month study, the research team reluctantly concluded that their vision for the waterfront warehouse could not be realized. Although located directly across the river from Pittsburgh's downtown area, the building was too "isolated psychologically and physically" from the economic center of the city to attract residents or businesses. Furthermore, the irregular hexagonal shape of the building would make it difficult to divide into living units of manageable and attractive sizes, and parking space would be especially difficult and expensive to accommodate inside the structure (the only available place on the site). Finally, high construction costs for conversion would permit only a five per cent rate of return on investment—too small to justify the risk.

The History and Landmarks Foundation decided that reuse of the building was not feasible without major subsidies, and it was razed. Disappointing as this result was to those who worked to save it, it had the unexpected benefit of expediting planning for a major redevelopment project in the surrounding area. Pittsburgh's business and planning community, impressed by the objectivity of the B&O warehouse study, took the Foundation seriously thereafter as a positive force for new investment in the city.

The Foundation had also gained increased respect from the National Endowment for the Arts through the honest approach it took to the railroad building's future. A second grant application was successful in 1975, when the Foundation proposed to undertake an activity centering more around people and their neighborhoods than around buildings.

Neighborhood Design and Planning. Arthur Ziegler, Landmark's president, understood that communities, like people, need healthy, positive self-images if they are to thrive. Neighborhoods need identities, and symbols to express them. Residents must have a sense of the strengths and weaknesses of their local institutions and must involve themselves in their betterment. The impetus for change and improvement must come from the citizens themselves, rather than from remote officials of bureaucratic agencies.

Ziegler saw a way for the Foundation, with its ten years' experience in neighborhood restoration programs, to serve as a catalyst in this process. Using just under \$30,000 of money from the National Endowment for the Arts and matching dollars from The Hillman Foundation, Inc., the group initiated a program of self-planning and neighborhood exhibits in four Pittsburgh-area communities.

The four neighborhoods are as varied as any in the Pittsburgh area. There is the North Side, a decayed but reawakening area with striking remnants of its 19th-century past. It was once a city in its own right, called Allegheny, with pleasant streets and attractive homes. There is Allentown, a hillside working-class neighborhood overlooking downtown Pittsburgh, where a stable but graying population has kept alive a strong community feeling but where the business district shows signs of seediness which idle teenagers have hastened through vandalism. There is Glenfield, a small town nine miles from the center of Pittsburgh where community survival itself is at stake, thanks to an interstate highway that has bisected the town and wiped out the entire business district, half of Glenfield's homes, and an equal portion of its real estate tax revenues. Finally, there is Shadyside, a primarily upper-middle-class residential neighborhood with some pockets of blight where the Foundation briefly explored community identity through local school-children.

In each of the first three neighborhoods, the Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation encouraged residents to lead in planning a project that would publicize the area's history, describe its strengths and weaknesses today, establish goals for improvement, and create an action plan for dealing with immediate needs.





The various ways the neighborhoods responded to the opportunity reflect the differences in the communities themselves. All the neighborhoods began by holding open community meetings and conducting surveys which showed a consensus about the best and worst features of life in the area.

The North Side is actually far more than a neighborhood; as a former city (annexed to Pittsburgh in 1907) it is comprised of many neighborhoods. That fact created some problems for landmarks since residents tended to identify with the smaller-scale districts and found it difficult to share common concerns with those living in other parts of the North Side. On the other hand, its large area and population meant that the North Side possessed all the resources needed to solve its problems, and past struggles to ward off demolition teams and rebuild the old city's business district had left experienced community organizations. Community meetings held by Landmarks staff revealed that North Side residents wanted most of all to publicize the existence of these community resources and improve the area's public image.

Any self-respecting community needs a name it can be proud of. "North Side," which came into use after annexation to Pittsburgh, emphasizes feelings of dependency and incompleteness. In recent years, as the area has begun to emerge from its doldrums and recall its more distant past, the name "Allegheny" has been revived and reapplied to the area. The History and Landmarks Foundation and the residents it worked with sought to reinforce the Allegheny identity. The residents decided to use the Endowment and Hillman Foundation funds to publish two books about Allegheny: one a glossy, richly-illustrated story of its history, architecture and current-day potential; the other a simpler directory of community resources.

Allegheny, as the former publication is titled, recalls the peak of the old city's proud history:

"Old Allegheny" is possibly the most nostalgic name in Pittsburgh. Immediately it conjures up longings for the magnificent Allegheny Market House, Boggs & Buhl's Department Store, Ober Park with its marvelous fountain, the great houses of Ridge Avenue and the more modest, yet very substantial, Victorian houses of Manchester and the Mexican War Streets. People remember the colorful neighborhoods of Old Allegheny, each with its own unique identity.

The book goes on to list some of Allegheny's famous sons and daughters, people like Andrew Carnegie, H. J. Heinz (the ketchup man), Gertrude Stein and Willa Cather. It was at Allegheny that Carnegie learned as a boy to love reading in a small private library, and then came back years later to commission the first of hundreds of Carnegie Libraries.

Carnegie and his contemporaries surely knew the large Italianate houses of the more affluent streets in Allegheny, and the magnificent riverfront exhibition halls built for the Pittsburgh Exposition of 1875. They might, if they were here to tell it, recall the massive public works project that shifted the tracks of the Pittsburgh, Fort Wayne & Chicago Railroad from grade level to a depressed right-of-way with overpasses for local streets. They would have seen the construction of the courthouse and numerous schools in the "Richardson Romanesque" style of architect H. H. Richardson, as well as houses and institutions of Greek Revival de-



sign. Their day has left modern Allegheny with examples of Gothic Revival and Italian Renaissance buildings, and even a few splendid examples of Elizabethan, French and Flemish Renaissance structures. Landscape architecture flourished, too; the old cattle-grazing Commons around which Allegheny grew became a carefully designed Victorian park in 1867, while the Allegheny "Diamond," the town square surrounded by the Carnegie Library, the market, the court house and post office, became a favorite strolling place.

In highlighting this eclectic architectural heritage as well as the civic clubs and cultural activities that flourished among Allegheny's diverse 19th-century ethnic groups, the *Allegheny* book has clearly contributed to the rebirth of community pride. Landmarks has helped Allegheny in other ways, too—not the least being its restoration of the old Italianate post office to serve as the Foundation's headquarters and as a Pittsburgh historical museum. "We could think of no other way of saving it except by buying it ourselves and occupying it as our home," recalls Foundation Chairman Charles Covert Arensberg in the book's Foreword.

The Foundation's sensitive interest in place names also resulted in the coining of the term "Mexican War Streets" to describe an area whose Spanish street names reflected its birth just after that otherwise unpopular war. The Mexican War Streets neighborhood is now a historic district where many young people are buying, restoring and living in fine old houses under a program started by Landmarks.

The History and Landmarks Foundation's only major regret about the Allegheny neighborhood awareness project was that too few people saw a

need and an opportunity to become actively involved at the time. Since then, however, the project's legacy—the *Allegheny* book and the resource directory—have helped to provide the impetus for broader participation in efforts to revitalize "Allegheny" and bury the "North Side" image. Allegheny today is, in Arthur Ziegler's words, "on the move, full of pride, optimism and workers."

Allentown, unlike Allegheny, has never lost its name or its pride. It has, however, experienced the early symptoms of a neighborhood in decline—a loss of 31% of its population between 1965 and 1970, and a near-total lack of new construction during the same period. Shopkeepers along Warrington Avenue, Allentown's main street, began moving to new shopping centers and leaving empty storefronts to window-breakers and graffiti artists. Yet to the 5,000 residents who remain, Allentown continues to be a friendly place with a small-town atmosphere. In a survey of opinions about Allentown's best features, residents mentioned this special quality more often than any other characteristic.

When the History and Landmarks staff went to Allentown to propose community action, the Foundation found two essential tools already in place: a local weekly newspaper and a neighborhood organization called the Hilltop Civic Improvement Association looking for a program. Spreading the word about community meetings was therefore easier than in Allegheny, and higher attendance resulted.



An enthusiastic group of residents conducted a walking and picture-taking tour of Allentown in order to learn more about its history and architecture, as well as its current problems. When the resulting photographs proved effective at telling the Allentown story, they were blown up and organized into a neighborhood exhibit mounted and staffed by volunteers from the community. A vacant storefront served as the exhibit hall, and between the opening reception attended by over 100 persons and closing day a month later, many Allentown residents wandered in and out learning and thinking about their part of Pittsburgh.

Allentown, too, published a book about itself as part of its neighborhood planning project. The Allentown book differs from Allegheny's in that it focuses on specific problems—public image, transportation, recreation, business district decay, police protection and so forth. For each, there is a description of the problem, an assessment of its magnitude, a list of measures already taken to solve it, and suggestions from the Foundation's staff for further improvement. Two examples merit specific mention here.

To counteract the decline of Warrington Avenue, the Foundation suggested that local merchants take advantage of low-interest loans available to small businesses and administered by the city for the renovation of their stores; the staff even designed a specific inexpensive painting plan to brighten the face of the avenue. The Hilltop Civic Improvement Association was also encouraged to work aggressively with local realtors to promote business property in Allentown.

The second problem had to do with youthful streetcorner hangers-out who were bothering older Allentown residents and showing their general alienation. Adults in the neighborhood first suggested a recreation center as a remedy—but would anyone use it? An existing center was underused because of racial conflicts and clique rivalry. When staff members talked with the young "toughs" they learned that a place to play basketball and later hours at the local bowling alley were what they really wanted. A basketball league was founded, the bowling alley revised its hours, and some of the youths began attending Civic Improvement Association meetings and participating in local matters.

Allentown is a cohesive settlement, a community in the best sense of that word. It is not glamorous, but it is highly "livable." The Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation, with the help of the Endowment and a private foundation, have built upon the spirit that was already there.

In Glenfield, the spirit itself is endangered. For the crime of being located in a glen along the Ohio River, the federal and state governments have extracted Glenfield's pound of flesh—its entire downtown, and about half its houses, people and financial base. It is unclear whether the town can survive with such a wound.

The very location that makes Glenfield ideal for the river crossing and an interchange of the new Interstate Highway 279 once provided the community's *raison d'être*. In the 19th century Glenfield was known as "Safe Landing," for flatboats, steamboats and ferries all stopped there. As a market town, Glenfield continued to thrive when the Pittsburgh, Fort Wayne & Chicago Railroad (later known as the Pennsy) came through. German immigrants planted the neighboring hills in grapes following the Civil War, and the wines they pro-





duced were shipped out by both rail and water. Glenfield even knew a brief oil boom in the 1890's.

The village suffered a setback in the St. Patrick's Day Flood of 1936, when over half of Glenfield was inundated, and a more serious problem when Route 65 along the Ohio River was enlarged in 1953, requiring the demolition of many downtown businesses. But nothing could compare with the trauma of the I-279 battle, which began in 1969 and continues to the present; residents long ago gave up trying to stop the highway, but they continue to feel the depression and frustration caused by its construction.

A booklet about Glenfield prepared by the Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation as part of its neighborhood planning project describes how life has changed for those who remain in the community:

Glenfield residents no longer have a small shopping area in which to buy groceries, they no longer have a Post Office, instead, they must travel to the town of Sewickley to buy their groceries and pick up their mail. School children no longer have a drugstore or a candy-store. The Borough hall is gone, town meetings are held in the Fire-house. Even the bus stop has been relocated. Glenfield residents must now negotiate the busy Route 65 in order to catch a bus. Residents fight a constant battle with dirt caused by highway construction and road blasting.

These problems seem relatively minor when compared with the challenges faced by town officials trying to maintain basic public services. Glenfield's antiquated water and sewer systems might have been repaired and expanded years ago if the prospect of massive condemnation and demolition had not hung over the town. Instead, highway blasting caused several serious breaks in the water line, requiring expenditure of over half a year's village tax revenues for repairs.

The Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation found Glenfield residents to be pleased with many aspects of their community, despite all these problems. Glenfielders particularly liked the warm, friendly atmosphere, and they were eager to pick up the pieces and go on. They welcomed Landmarks' assistance in directing them toward positive actions for planning, public facilities funding and new development.

Glenfield's neighborhood exhibit consisted of slides and blown-up photographs which documented the problems caused by I-279. Staff members prepared a booklet which described these problems and—more importantly—made specific suggestions about ways to seek help in planning for the future. The Foundation sent copies of the booklet to county, state and regional planning officials who were in a position to help. Still, the Foundation counseled Glenfield officials to consider seeking a merger with another town, or alternatively to buy services from other jurisdictions, as a means of survival. The town's elected officials have since sought and received help in preparing a town plan from an urban planning team from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

These three communities in the Pittsburgh metropolitan area share an important characteristic, despite their obvious differences: they are the beloved homes of their residents. In highlighting the feeling of social identity tied to place and nurturing it in the face of oft-discouraging problems, the Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation has captured the most important element in a truly livable city.



Savannah

We support the idea that it is far better, and cheaper we might add, to rehabilitate the sound housing stock that is in most downtown neighborhoods and in Savannah's Victorian District, than to build public housing projects that are antiseptic, impersonal, and give no sense of neighborhood.

Leopold Adler, President
Savannah Landmark Rehabilitation
Project, Inc.

"Neighborhood power" is overcoming and replacing the listless resistance of former years. There is a new localism—a new sense of purpose and direction designed to preserve and conserve the life and character of these urban cornerstones, and thus prevent those massive dislocations of the recent past.

"Displacement Unsolved,"
American Preservation,
October-November 1977

In Savannah, funds from the National Endowment for the Arts have supported what one might call "second generation" historic preservation—the conservation and restoration of an economically and racially diverse neighborhood. Here, the emphasis lies on protecting low-income residents from displacement as well as on rehabilitating the architecturally interesting buildings they live in.

Citizens of Savannah led in the historic preservation movement in the early 1960's, when most other cities remained preoccupied with large-scale demolition and "renewal." Recognizing the great architectural value that lay hidden behind decades of dilapidation and neglect in a downtown residential neighborhood, a group of prominent local citizens organized as the Historic Savannah Foundation, won recognition from the National Park Service for the area as a historic district, and undertook a number of restoration projects. Today, Savannah's historic district is once again an elegant area of gracious and expensive homes of the Federal period and style, as it was when General Sherman marched into the city in 1864 and decided to present it as a Christmas gift to President Lincoln rather than burn it down.

The leaders of Historic Savannah, including its president, Leopold Adler (a local investment banker), carried out their work with a missionary sense of the righteousness of their cause. By sparking the restoration of some 800 buildings, they were creating beautiful neighborhoods, causing a boom in the construction industry, increasing the city's tax base, and developing a widely-recognized tourist attraction. Without their efforts, many buildings in the run-down historic district would have been demolished and replaced with faceless apartment buildings or commercial enterprises. Most were vacant and already condemned when the work began.

The successful revitalization of Savannah's historic district caused the preservation movement to spread to the Victorian area just south of it. A group of Savannahans including Adler and Mary Elizabeth Lattimore Reiter became alarmed, however, at the possibility of massive displacement of low-income persons then living in the Victorian neighborhood. They vowed to prevent that displacement.

The extension of trolley lines southward from downtown in the late 19th



century had made it possible for this 45-block section surrounding a large park (which served as a military parade ground during the Civil War) to emerge as Savannah's first suburb—although hardly called that at the time. The Victorian district gained recognition on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974.

Victorian district architecture, which dates mainly from the years just following the Civil War, falls most commonly into the category of the "Victorian carpenter box"—a highly descriptive name for the multi-family wooden structures of simple rectangular proportions adorned with gingerbreaded porches, mouldings and entryways. Brick sidewalks and large trees are important exterior amenities. In the second half of the 19th century, working and middle class families occupied the district. Gradually, however, absentee landlordism became the rule, along with the deteriorating conditions and decline in occupants' economic levels that seem to be the inevitable accompaniments of this ownership pattern. In the Victorian district today, only a fifth of the approximately 1,200 housing units are occupied by their owners. Most tenants are black and poor, and many have large families who live in overcrowded conditions in the apartments which divide the buildings.

Not all Savannah preservationists shared Adler's enthusiasm for the Victorian District. To appreciate the District's value, one had to remember that the city's heritage included more than one period of history, more than one architectural style, and more than one economic, social and racial group.

Furthermore, as the preservation movement came of age in Savannah, it became increasingly clear that preservation itself could cause undesirable side effects including the sudden, sharp increases in value that Adler and Reiter feared would drive out low-income residents of the area being restored. This issue did not arise often in the original historic district, where most residents were already gone before rehabilitation began. But in the Victorian district 92 per cent of the housing units remained occupied despite the substandard condition of many. This meant that if restoration drove the residents out, they might have no alternative to public housing or even more dilapidated homes farther from their jobs and away from the friendly neighborhoods where many had lived for more than 30 years. Certainly, few of the current occupants could afford to move back into repaired structures with sharply increased rents or selling prices.

To solve these problems, Adler created a separate organization, outside the Historic Savannah Foundation, to restore the Victorian District. Thus, the Savannah Landmark Rehabilitation Project was born, with Adler as president and Reiter as executive director. They knew that many of the preservation techniques used in the historic district could not be applied to the Victorian district. The most common approach to restoration in the former had been to locate affluent buyers with access to long-term credit who would agree to protect the architectural and historical integrity of a building in repairing it, and would later make their homes in the houses they meticulously restored, inside and out. In the Victorian district, by contrast, poor residents lacked such access to capital, and other means—dependent on the public as well as private sector—would have to be found.

The first step for Adler and the Savannah Landmark group was to establish a board of directors with broad representation of minority and neighborhood interests. Current members include an officer of a minority-owned bank, the minister of a predominantly black neighborhood church, spokesmen for various social service organizations which operate in the Victorian district, and a broad spectrum of Savannah's citizens including neighborhood representatives.

Next, Savannah Landmark needed a small, full-time paid professional staff. In 1975, the National Endowment for the Arts awarded the group a \$17,000 grant, to be matched with private donations, to finance the three-person staff. The group not only seeks restoration of the Victorian district's architectural resources, but it is also developing programs which can help neighborhood residents immediately. Already, vacant lots have been converted to community gardens where families can plant and harvest individual plots. A club for teenage boys, established by a member of Savannah Landmark's board, enjoys a variety of activities and trips financed in part through earnings from odd jobs performed for the rehabilitation organization. A sense of neighborhood—so important in any livable city—was evident last year at a Savannah Landmark-sponsored block party which drew 500 people.

That block party was held in front of a building Savannah Landmark acquired in reasonably good condition. Guests at the gathering helped pick out new paint colors for the exterior of the attractive multi-family residence with graceful highly-decorated porches, large windows, high ceilings, triple-gabled front, and old shade trees. The building exemplifies many amenities which cannot be duplicated in new construction today at a cost even remotely affordable for low-income families.

SNAP. In June of 1977, rehabilitation of the Victorian District began in earnest. By this time, Savannah Landmark had dubbed its effort the Savannah Neighborhood Action Project, or SNAP. Savannah Landmark plans eventually to rehabilitate 600 housing units for low-income tenants under the auspices of SNAP, leaving the other 600 to be renovated with private capital by middle- and upper-income investors through the more traditional approach to restoration. The result should be a neighborhood of true economic, social and racial diversity. In some cases, it may become possible for low-income residents to own their homes; more often, they will have a voice in management through tenant organizations.

The first building to be rehabilitated in the SNAP effort is making use of a rather complex web of financial and labor arrangements which depend heavily on federal government support. The effectiveness of at least three national policies regarding jobs and housing will be tested through SNAP and this first structure. Located in an official urban renewal area, the building qualifies for low-interest federal loans established under section 312 of the National Housing Act of 1964 to cover rehabilitation costs. The





work will consist of exterior restoration as faithful as possible to the original appearance, and a complete but economical inside repair job to bring the structure up to building code standards. The result will be three separate, two-story apartments. This first building's outside is plain except for interesting detail on the entries, windows and roof mouldings.

Happily, building restoration is labor-intensive and can provide jobs, as well as housing, for Victorian District residents. To realize this potential, Savannah Landmark has received a grant under the Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA) which enables the organization to train and employ seven unskilled and seven semi-skilled workers in the rehabilitation process. William Mobley, an experienced teacher from the Savannah Area Minority Contractors Association's training school for construction skills, acts as both instructor and foreman for the apprentice CETA workers on the SNAP project. Those who participate successfully in the project will have the skills they need to find continued employment in the construction field.

A third federal program will make it possible for low-income families to live in the upgraded houses. Already, Savannah Landmark has a waiting list for occupancy in the first 15 units of the 100 it has acquired. Realities of construction and maintenance costs—even with federal assistance in both financing and labor—are such that the repaired buildings would still be beyond the means of their current occupants without rent subsidies.

Savannah Landmark therefore plans to participate in the program established under Section 8 of the Community Development Act of 1974, which provides such subsidies. The Department of Housing and Urban Development has approved Savannah Landmark's application for \$80,000 in subsidies over the first two years. As an alternative to expensive and problematical federal funding of public housing, Section 8 simply pays the difference between 25% of a family's income and the fair market rent, as set by the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

As each residential building in the Victorian District is rehabilitated, Savannah Landmark will need to duplicate this multi-faceted arrangement or work out a variation to meet the needs of the particular project. Adler and his organization do not claim to have all aspects of the neighborhood displacement problem permanently solved, but they are hopeful that their careful attention to the problem will make the preservation of the Victorian District a benefit to all Savannahans, not just those who are affluent.

To share their experiences with those involved in preservation in other cities, Savannah Landmark recently hosted and co-sponsored a conference which addressed "sound alternatives to the tough problems of deterioration and displacement that are occurring in architecturally stable inner city neighborhoods across the United States." The National Endowment for the Arts provided funds for the conference, along with a coalition of environmental and minority organizations and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Also participating were the Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation and the



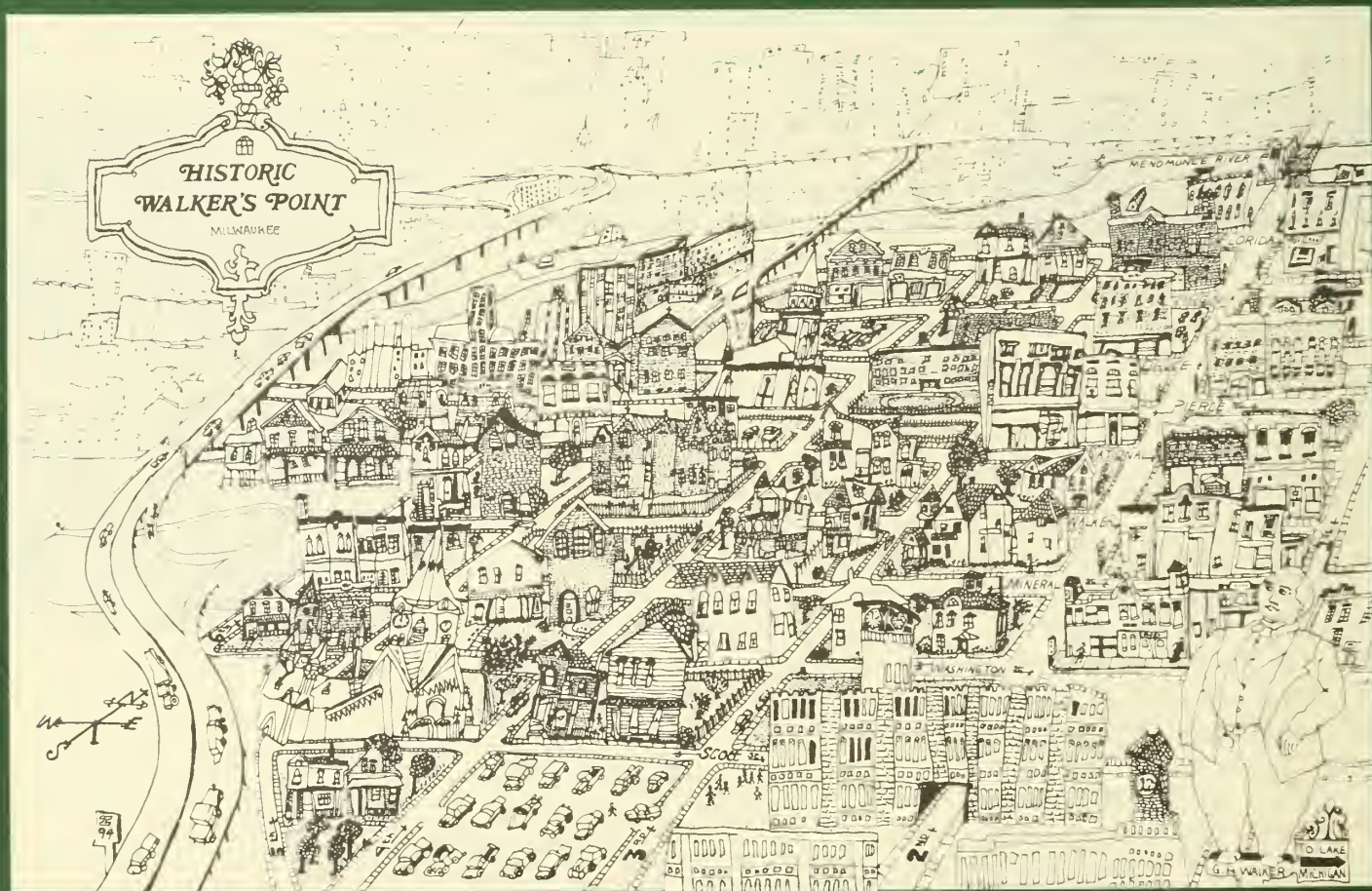
Neighbors: Conservation in a Changing Community
A film documentary by The Conservation Foundation for the National Endowment for the Arts

For information on "Neighbors," Suite 107, 1015 W. Flat Street, Savannah, Georgia 31401

Mount Auburn (Cincinnati) Good Housing Foundation. In addition to attending panel discussions and speeches on landlord-tenant problems, financing of low-income rehabilitation, neighborhood organization and other topics, conferees took tours of the Victorian and historic districts of Savannah, held workshops in the Victorian area, and viewed an Endowment-funded film called "Neighborhoods: Conservation in a Changing Community," prepared by the Conservation Foundation. Savannah Landmark will publish the conference proceedings.

With the Victorian District project, Savannah is once again in the forefront of the maturing historic preservation movement. The Savannah Landmarks Rehabilitation Project escapes the "elitist" label which has on occasion been attached, with justification, to some preservation efforts. Savannah Landmark's work indicates, in contrast, that restoration of architecturally important buildings and neighborhoods can help make cities livable for all persons—provided the sensitivity, good sense, cooperation and financial prowess that are required for broad-based historic preservation are exercised abundantly.

Leopold Adler believes that while the total rehabilitation effort will cost millions of dollars, the Savannah Neighborhood Action Project could not exist without the administrative support of the National Endowment for the Arts. This small grant, like so many from the Endowment's Architecture, Planning, & Design Program, thus initiates benefits with a multiplier effect that far exceeds the dollar value of the grant itself.



Milwaukee

The historical significance of the Walker's Point neighborhood is not as the setting of great events nor as the home of famous people. Rather, it is the fact that it is an integral part of the history of Milwaukee and that it reflects in microcosm, the heritage of the many groups of people who called—and still call—the Walker's Point neighborhood "theirs." Each group left its mark on the neighborhood and in its churches, in its businesses, and in its residences....

For a meaningful program of Neighborhood Conservation to occur, Historic Walker's Point, Inc., must expand its ongoing program and it must work in ways that it has not worked in the past. It must be a program of resident participation, neighborhood communication, community organization, and assistance on request. But, with no apron strings attached.

Bruce M. Kriviskey, AIP, Former Director
Historic Walker's Point, Inc.

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hen a small group of citizens sought to reverse the decline of an important historic neighborhood in Milwaukee, the Arts Endowment shared the group's enthusiasm and helped its work with a small grant to provide professional planning and administrative leadership. A recent follow-up grant is enabling the group to move toward the bricks-and-mortar stage of the neighborhood's revitalization.

When Milwaukee incorporated in 1846, the new city's boundaries enfolded three distinct and rival communities—Juneautown, Kilbourntown and Walker's Point. Each of these settlements was named for a pioneer who laid claim to an area of land and began building therein. George Walker's site, a bit of high ground in the midst of swampland, was settled more slowly than the others because of a title dispute and Walker's lack of aggressiveness as a land developer. Walker became mayor of Milwaukee and moved to Juneautown in 1851, leaving Walker's Point to be settled gradually by the successions of immigrants who came to work in the city's growing industries.

Today, only Walker's Point remains relatively intact among the original settlements as a distinguishable neighborhood whose homes, shops, churches and other institutions date mainly from the mid-1800's; Juneautown and Kilbourntown have disappeared into history, replaced by the steel and concrete of modern Milwaukee. Even the survival of Walker's Point seemed doubtful during the 1960's, when major new industrial development was planned for the area. But by 1977, the outlook for Walker's Point's future had improved, in large part because of a new city-wide awareness of the community's historical, architectural and social value.

Neighborhood Conservation. The story of Walker's Point is less one of historic preservation than of neighborhood conservation—a concept that implies greater flexibility in adapting the area to present residents' requirements without destroying its human scale, its vitality or its architectural legacy. The efforts of a small non-profit organization, Historic Walker's Point, Inc., have contributed much to the growing appreciation of the neighborhood's merits.

A few statistics reveal much about the current condition of Walker's Point. The neighborhood consists of some 150 city blocks populated by over 10,000



people, nearly half of whom speak Spanish as their primary language. Census records indicate that 89% of the buildings there were built before 1939, but it is more significant that well over half date from the 1860's and 1870's. Most Walker's Point homes are wooden, built in the eclectic 19th-century "cottage" styles ranging from Greek Revival to Victorian Gothic. Between a third and half are tenant-occupied. Commercial structures tend to be small in scale, with shops on the ground floor and apartments above. Public buildings, many churches, and some "mansions" (built by residents who became successful and chose to remain in the neighborhood) are constructed of "Cream City brick"—a material which gave Milwaukee its turn-of-the-century nickname and which now gives the area a distinctively solid but light-colored look.

The neighborhood as a whole is home to working families, as it has been from its beginning. Its stability stems in part from the rich ethnic variety it contains; it is a "stew" rather than a "melting pot," because residents of Latin, German, Serbian, Polish, Scandinavian, Greek and even American Indian descent have retained their distinctive identities to an extent unusual in the age of mass production and mass media. Yet no one, least of all its residents, considers the neighborhood "quaint," and no one seeks to alter it in that direction.

Walker's Point's greatest asset is probably its reasonably-priced and basically sound (if sometimes frayed) housing in a convenient location just a few blocks south of Milwaukee's downtown. Yet a decade ago the age of its housing stock, the percentage of rented homes and the lack of new investment in the community were interpreted by city officials as sure signs that the neighborhood was becoming a slum, a prime candidate for clearance and conversion to heavy industrial uses.

Transportation links in and near the Walker's Point neighborhood encouraged the industrial dreams of the city's planning department. A series of canals and two major rivers form the neighborhood's boundaries on two sides, and the completion of the St. Lawrence Seaway meant that new industrial development in Milwaukee—and specifically in the vicinity of Walker's Point—seemed likely in the 1960's. Railroad lines also traverse the neighborhood, as does the new Interstate Highway 94 and its interchange. When all these factors were put together—good transportation and an extensive land area seemingly suitable for clearance and new construction—a future industrial center seemed certain in Walker's Point.

Inevitably, rumors of the plans for Walker's Point reached its residents quickly; thinking that their homes might be taken for demolition, many owners ceased to occupy, improve or even maintain them. In 1970, when—due to a number of economic and political changes—the industrial development projects failed to come about, Walker's Point was left static and depressed. Yet at the same time, a few discerning people—including several neighborhood residents—began to perceive the opportunity for revitalization that lay in Walker's Point—a potential that was protected, if not enhanced, by the long period of economic inactivity. The neighborhood's 19th-century architecture remained, providing low-cost housing and business space of a quality that cannot be duplicated economically in today's newer structures.



Historic Walker's Point, Inc. was founded in 1973 by a group of Milwaukee preservation enthusiasts, supported by members of the city's Junior League. As a non-profit, tax-exempt organization, Historic Walker's Point, Inc., concentrated in its first year on historical research and public information. Volunteers prepared a neighborhood guidebook and a slide show to illustrate Walker's Point's architectural variety, and they began conducting walking tours for neighborhood residents, school-children and others. To encourage property owners to renovate run-down structures in historically sensitive ways, Historic Walker's Point, Inc. also offered information about design and financing and demonstrated rehabilitation techniques on an 1855 Greek Revival cottage purchased with a grant from the Junior League.

In 1974, Historic Walker's Point, Inc. reached a point at which voluntary efforts could not keep up with the level of activities that the organization's board of directors envisioned. A \$17,100 grant from the City Options program of the National Endowment for the Arts, matched with funds from the Junior League, Milwaukee foundations and businesses and private contributions (including in-kind contributions of professional services by attorneys and accountants enabled the group to hire a full-time executive director experienced in planning and preservation. Bruce Kriviskey, who became director in early 1975, was particularly interested in developing a neighborhood conservation program that would be built on the concerns and values of Walker's Point residents, not of outsiders. This meant, in Kriviskey's words, "planning *with*" rather than "on" the neighborhood. It also meant that special efforts had to be directed toward overcoming neighborhood puzzlement about the purposes of Historic Walker's Point, Inc., winning the confidence, enthusiasm, and—most important—involvement of the neighborhood's people.

Kriviskey and others involved with Historic Walker's Point, Inc. knew from talking to area homeowners and tenants that their first goal was simply to live in good-quality homes in a "nice" neighborhood. The historic value of the buildings they lived in was of secondary importance, compared with good plumbing and wiring, insulation to cut down heating bills, roofing to keep the rain out. But these essential improvements could be carried out in either of two ways—the traditional "remuddling," which ignores the aesthetic intent of the architect or carpenter who designed the house, or what Kriviskey calls a "sympathetic rehabilitation," which employs materials, designs and techniques that respect the historical integrity of the building but does not constitute a more thorough, but expensive, restoration or an often equally expensive modernization. By encouraging sympathetic rehabilitation, but not full restoration, Historic Walker's Point, Inc. seeks to avoid one source of the escalation of values that would drive out current residents and change Walker's Point into "an enclave for the wealthy nouveau urbanites."

The organization also encourages home improvements in Walker's Point by means of a small revolving fund which offers interest-free loans of up to five hundred dollars to make essential repairs, especially those needed on an emergency basis. Many owners do their own repair work, borrowing tools for free from the city of Milwaukee's lending library of power saws, ladders, wrenches, and just about every other tool needed for do-it-yourself jobs.





Spreading the word about these services and about the emerging vitality of the area may be the most important accomplishment of Historic Walker's Point, Inc. A monthly bilingual newsletter distributed free of charge to 3,000 homes in Walker's Point has fostered much of the needed communication, as evidenced by the growing numbers of people who have sought help with home improvement projects after reading in the newsletter about available assistance. The paper has also publicized neighborhood activities, restaurants, church functions, social events and festivals like the colorful Mexican Independence Day celebration.

One 1975 issue of the *Historic Walker's Point News* described in detail the exterior rehabilitation of the organization's demonstration house, offering step-by-step guidance for others attempting similar projects. Labor was supplied by a graduate architecture student at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, a tenant who lived in the house during part of the rehabilitation, students from the nearby Milwaukee Technical High School's Building Trades Program, the Milwaukee Spanish Center's Summer Youth Work Program, and occasional extra volunteers. Graduate student architect Mark Latus held workshops in various techniques as he went along. He stripped away as-

bestos fake-brick siding and gypsum board added in the 1930's, revealing the original wood clapboards. These were salvaged by filling nail holes, repairing broken boards and trim, and painting. Latus worked in small wall sections, bringing each section to a different point in the work so visitors could see the entire sequence of tasks in a single visit to the house.

The article describing the demonstration project provided such helpful hints as how to cope with huge mounds of stripped-off asbestos siding (rent a "dumpster") and how to choose paint colors (look while sanding to see what the original color was and paint with a similar color to avoid the expense of multiple coats). In the spirit of non-doctrinaire rehabilitation the article also promoted the use of aluminum combination storm windows, arguing that they could be purchased with pre-painted trim that would blend with the painted sash, and were more readily and cheaply available than new wood storm windows.

To help spread a special feeling about Walker's Point among young residents, Historic Walker's Point, Inc. published a coloring-book guide called *Historic Walker's Point: A Guide for Children by Children*. The book's charming line drawings of Walker's Point landmarks were created by young art students in Milwaukee's Cardinal Stritch College Junior Arts Program, and captions (in both English and Spanish) came from Tape-recorded remarks that neighborhood children made about the buildings they saw on a tour of the area. The publication was financed under the Arts Endowment grant and a grant from the Allen Bradley Foundation of Milwaukee.



In Walker's Point, as elsewhere, an appreciation of architectural value and preservation opportunity sparked the initial involvement of non-resident advocates. With professional direction, made possible in part by the Endowment grant, Historic Walker's Point, Inc. developed a new focus on neighborhood needs and interests, which were embodied in a 1977 statement of purpose for the organization. The statement speaks to the preservation of the neighborhood's "physical and social qualities . . . that contribute to its distinctiveness and function as a living, historic, multi-ethnic, urban neighborhood..."

Five specific goals included in the organization's redirected program of neighborhood conservation are:

1. to achieve within neighborhood residents a sense of awareness and identity with the Walker's Point neighborhood
2. to achieve cohesiveness, communication and concerted action through a neighborhood organization made up of residents, property owners, and business people
3. to achieve channels of communication and cooperation with public officials and agencies at all levels of government
4. to achieve confidence in the economic viability of the Walker's Point neighborhood for sound personal business, lending institution and public agency investment, and
5. to achieve a high degree of visibility and a reputation for accomplishment through the completion or active support of physical development activities within the Walker's Point neighborhood

Mary Ellen Philipp became Historic Walker's Point, Inc.'s second executive director in 1977, after Kriviskey left to begin practice as a preservation and planning consultant. Ms. Philipp's prior experience as a volunteer leader in several Milwaukee arts organization, prepared her well for her new role.

In 1978, Walker's Point was nominated as a historic district on the National Register of Historic Places, and the National Endowment for the Arts awarded the organization a second grant under its Livable Cities granting category. This \$20,000 stipend will fund a study to determine how the group can revitalize a number of vacant commercial buildings within Walker's Point. "It will be difficult for us to stimulate only residential restoration without revitalizing our Main Street," Mary Ellen Philipp wrote in her grant application. The Boston architectural firm of Anderson Notter Associates, whose specialty is adaptive reuse of older buildings, will provide Historic Walker's Point, Inc. with a specific plan, including recommendations for financial approaches, so the neighborhood can benefit from new businesses and services in the rehabilitated structures. Walker's Point residents will be involved in both planning and executing the commercial restoration.

The challenge of neighborhood conservation in Walker's Point is great—much greater than the challenge of historic preservation alone. Much remains to be done. But the professional and lay dedication to the vitality of this urban neighborhood embodied in the goals of Historic Walker's Point, Inc. have helped to define a livable city neighborhood as one whose amenities go well beyond its buildings, no matter how architecturally or historically important they may be. The neighborhood's real importance is that people live there.





Jersey City

We wish to persist in PROVING that the negative perception surrounding the quality of residence for poor people, "welfare recipients" and within public housing is a misconception, based more in fear and convenience than in fact. And that given half a chance and a bit of support, housing for poor persons—even high rise, high density housing—can not only be "decent, safe and sanitary," but more importantly, generate a functional sense of community which resounds [with] the difference between "surviving" and living.

Jersey City Housing Authority's
Grant Application to the
National Endowment for the Arts

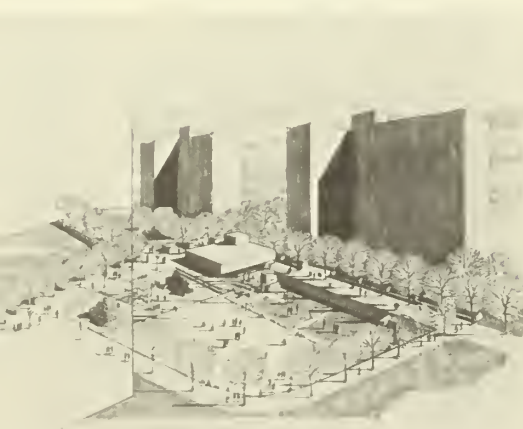
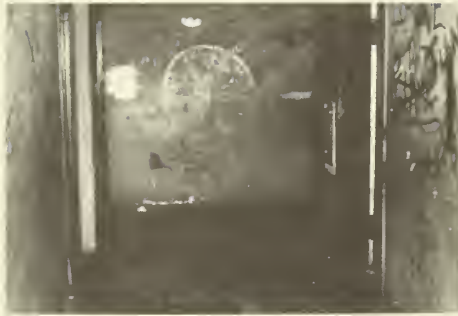
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ustaining an emerging spirit of tenant pride and involvement in the management of a public housing project—that was the challenge facing the Jersey City Housing Authority in 1977. A small grant from the National Endowment for the Arts helped by giving a resident artist the opportunity to create a massive outdoor mural, a colorful symbol that promised to complete an already-successful redesign of the project's open spaces.

Providing decent housing for low-income persons is one of the most challenging tasks facing city governments. Since 1937, cities have worked in partnership with the federal government to house poor people. For many years, the accepted approach was to construct low-cost publicly-owned housing; that policy, which lasted until the emphasis shifted to rent subsidies in the early 1970's, changed the face of our inner cities. In place of rows of wooden tenements that sprang up in the years of rapid immigration and industrialization, massive apartment houses were built grouped together in "projects" that were often isolated from shopping areas and essential services.

In the early years of public housing most tenants had jobs and reasonable expectations of escape from poverty. In the 1950's and early 1960's, however, the least fortunate American urban dwellers—welfare recipients, unemployed, disabled or unskilled workers, blacks and other minorities, and single-parent families—became the predominant public housing population. When this happened the typical project's economic (and often racial) homogeneity made public housing an instant ghetto, and the hopelessness of its tenants was reflected in the carelessness and vandalism that scarred the buildings and in the violence inflicted on many residents.

The A. Harry Moore public housing project in Jersey City, New Jersey offered a classic example of all these ills in 1973. Only four years later, however, the Moore project had become a place where the local housing authority's repairs to walls and windows could be counted on to stay repaired, where a sense of community had grown up in place of indifference, and an aesthetic appreciation showed up in the dramatic improvement to the project's exterior spaces and other public areas, including hallways. While the inherent problems of large-scale public housing had not disappeared altogether from the Moore project—tenants remained poor, unemployed and racially segregated—the Jersey City Housing Authority together with the tenants had proven that deterioration, vandalism and danger were not inevitable side-effects of public housing. Two key elements in this transformation were tenant involvement in decision-making and use of art to build community pride.



The A. Harry Moore public housing project was built in 1953, at the peak of post-war activity in the public housing field. Sited on the swampland and bounded by a large park, a cemetery, a highway, and a white working-class neighborhood, the project consists of several brick buildings of twelve stories each, arranged in a misshapen circle. Its 664 apartments range in size from one to four bedrooms. They are populated by 2,300 persons, including 1,800 children—about three children under 18 for every adult. Approximately 80% of the tenants are black, while 15% are Spanish-speaking and 4% are whites of other ethnic backgrounds. About three-quarters of the families in the Moore project receive some form of public assistance, and most are headed by single adults, usually women.

Robert Rigby, executive director of the Jersey City Housing Authority, described the condition of Moore in 1973 as “rancid.” He went on, in Congressional testimony, to detail its horrors: “Its grounds, banal asphalt and dirt; interior public spaces, vandalized beyond recognition; evidence of maintenance, totally absent; infested heaps of garbage and debris, commonplace; the putrid stench of urine, ever present; lighting, abysmal.” Constant breakage had led Rigby’s predecessor to replace stairway windows with steel plates, making the stairs dark 24 hours a day. As evidence of the repugnance of the place to eligible tenants, 160 apartments lay vacant.

Against incredible odds, Rigby and his director of tenant services, Arthur Pugh, determined to break the cycle of vandalism and decay. They knew that public expenditure for repairs would be wasted unless the Moore project’s residents were willing to take on the responsibility of making the improvements last. Beginning with a few concerned tenants, the Housing

Authority began an organizing effort—apartment by apartment, floor by floor, building by building. Soon each building had a tenant organization; later, representatives from each building formed a tenant council for the whole project.

Striking a bargain with each building organization, the Authority promised to repair all public spaces within the buildings—entrances, hallways, stairwells and lobbies—if the tenant groups would work actively to maintain them and prevent their vandalism. The tenants were also given the opportunity to choose paint colors for the hallways, which changed overnight from drab and peeling to bright and colorful. Stair windows were soon in place, along with new doors, lobby mailboxes and brick lobby walls. A full year after the repair work was completed, the Authority knew it had won its gamble, because all the improvements were still intact.

“To have executed rehabilitation was one matter,” said Rigby. “To sustain the work, through the efforts of the tenant organizations, was a qualitatively different plane of success; the improbable had become undeniable fact.”

In 1975, the Jersey City Housing Authority noticed another kind of improvement occurring, this time entirely through the residents’ initiative. The bright but plain walls of the hallways had inspired a number of artistically-bent tenants to create imaginative and beautiful murals and super-graphics in place of the graffiti that had marred them earlier. Tenant organizations began sponsoring mural contests. At the same time, rededications of the buildings and their new decorations became major social events and led to other happenings, such as Christmas plays, bake sales and gospel sings.

One young tenant, 18-year-old Tony Wofford, turned up often as the winner of mural competitions. A recent high school graduate, Wofford works full time as a clerk in a clothing store to support his mother and siblings.

After hours, he plays the saxophone, does missionary work for his Jehovah's Witness church, and paints murals. He hopes to attend art school someday.

The building improvements made the housing complex's grounds look even bleaker than before, by contrast. But success on the inside gave the Housing Authority courage to try a large-scale improvement on the outside, again using the tenant organization as planners, participants and protectors. The tenants' council, the Authority and the award-winning Cleveland architecture firm of Don M. Nishaka and Associates produced a number of different design options and invited all A. Harry Moore residents to vote for the designs they wanted to see in their community. An incredible 711 of 934 eligible voters turned out and chose designs for new light fixtures, trees, grassy areas, "tot lots" with playground equipment, a central recreation area with a sunken basketball court, and a pavillion for community celebrations and open-air meetings. Soon, the exterior improvements were complete; a year later, they remained intact.

When the mayor of Jersey City came to stroll through the grounds of the Moore project and view the improvements, he was startled by a six-year-old boy who said to him, "Hey, man, get off the grass!" Clearly, A. Harry Moore tenants of all ages had taken on a proprietary interest in their neighborhood.

After all this accomplishment, it was only natural that a slight let-down feeling set in in 1977. What more could be done? How could people's interest be sustained? Together, the tenant council and the Housing Authority came up with an idea, inspired once again by a blank wall waiting to be decorated. This time, the wall was a 60-foot long, 15-foot high retaining wall that bordered the new sunken basketball court. This wall could bear the biggest, grandest mural on the site. And the person to paint it was Tony Wofford.

This idea fit in well with the "City-scale" grant program of the National Endowment for the Arts' Architecture and Environmental Arts Division. The Jersey City Housing Authority applied to the Endowment in 1977 and received a \$10,000 grant to cover the cost of materials and a small stipend for Wofford. As with the earlier improvements, the A. Harry Moore tenants will determine the final mural design, choosing from a number of sketches prepared by Wofford, who will then execute the final painting.

The Housing Authority recently formalized tenant activism in the complex by offering property management training to members of the new A. Harry Moore Tenant Management Corporation. After completion of the training program in early 1978, the Corporation will take over total management of the complex under contract to the Jersey City Housing Authority. For a few residents, this will mean full-time employment. For the rest, it will offer on-the-spot management by people who actually live in the community and care—out of enlightened self-interest—about its continued maintenance.

Tenant activism at the A. Harry Moore project has also spawned larger community involvement among the residents. No longer feeling hopeless and powerless, the adults of the neighborhood are sensing their political strength as a group. The tenant council has taken on a program to encourage participation in civic affairs—a get-out-the-vote drive that led recently to an incredible 87% turnout among the project's eligible voters for a mayoralty election.

All these successes suggest strongly that the partnership between the Jersey City Housing Authority and the tenants of the A. Harry Moore public housing complex has achieved what Authority director Rigby calls "a functional sense of community which resounds with the difference between surviving and living."





Boston/Roxbury

The collection and exhibition of artifacts for black Americans is not a luxury. The African-American historical organization that defines success by its support within the black community must make a tangible contribution to the improvement, health and liberation of that community. Its program should anticipate the future and be as grounded in the always-changing present as it is in the past.

Byron Rushing, President
Museum of Afro-American History

We do not know where we are if we cannot remember where we've been, we can't make informed decisions about where to go if we can't recognize where we are and where we've been.

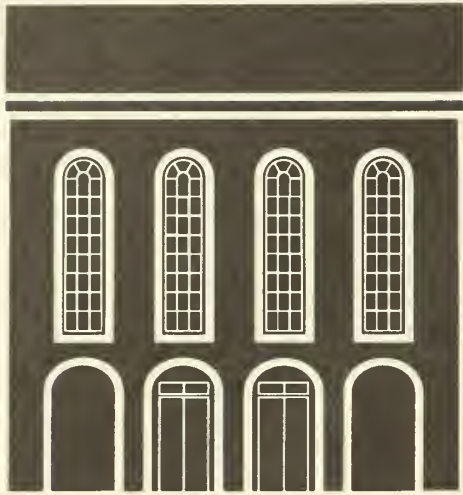
Wall Plaque
Museum of Afro-American History

As the site of the American Revolution's early battles, Boston has always enjoyed a well-developed sense of history. Thousands of tourists come to the city each year to walk the Freedom Trail, a self-guiding tour of Revolutionary landmarks that includes, among other things, the Old North Church (where a single lantern in the church tower—"one if by land"—sent Paul Revere on his midnight ride); the old State House (site of the Boston Massacre); and Paul Revere's house. Until recently, however, few Bostonians thought to pay similar respects to landmarks commemorating the history of the city's black population. The Museum of Afro-American History has filled that void with its educational programs, exhibits, historic preservation activities and neighborhood awareness efforts in Boston's most significant areas for black history—Roxbury and Beacon Hill. In doing so, the Museum has been careful to relate its historical interests to the community needs of Boston's black population today, particularly in Roxbury.

Three grants from the National Endowment for the Arts have aided the Museum's efforts. The first, for \$50,000, supported Roxbury neighborhood projects beginning in 1974. The second—a \$20,000 stipend granted in 1976—has gone toward the creation of a Roxbury heritage trail, and the most recent—\$14,000 out of the 1978 Livable Cities program—is providing design funds for exterior spaces around Beacon Hill historical sites.

The first blacks landed in Boston in 1638, when the ship *Desire* arrived bearing "some cotton and tobacco and negroes." slavery as a legal institution was unique in Massachusetts in that the early blacks who were indentured there enjoyed the right to testify and sue in court. During the Revolution, both sides offered slaves their freedom in return for military service. After 1783, when the Revolution ended and the Commonwealth officially outlawed slavery, Boston became a haven for runaway southern slaves.

Free Boston blacks settled at first in the city's North End, but after the War of Independence they established a large community on the north slope of Beacon Hill while whites settled on the south slope. On Beacon Hill, blacks established a church, a school and a number of community organizations. Their Baptist house of worship served also as a meeting house and school for the African Society, around which black community life centered. The African Meeting House was constructed in 1806 by volunteer laborers, all free black men. Still standing, its pleasing proportions and simple design are of the Federal style, but alterations made in the 1850's included the addition of two-story arched



windows, a vaulted ceiling above the altar, and curved stairways.

The history of the African Meeting House reflects the many changes experienced by blacks throughout Boston's past. Some of this history was enacted within its walls; William Lloyd Garrison organized the New England Abolitionist Society there in 1834, after being refused permission to speak in Faneuil Hall. He and other orators for the cause spoke there so frequently that it soon became known as the Abolitionist Church. Many of its members provided refuge for runaway slaves—often at some peril, since the Fugitive Slave Act (passed in 1850) gave the owners the right to pursue their slaves into the north and force their return into bondage. The 54th Massachusetts Regiment, comprised entirely of blacks, was recruited in the Meeting House for Civil War duty.

Black children learned to read and write in the African Meeting House in its earliest days, but the rapid growth of Beacon Hill's black population—about 1,200 people when the Meeting House was built—soon required construction of a school building next door. Black children were not permitted to attend Boston's public schools, but the city did subsidize the school

which was constructed in 1834 for black children. Primary funding for the school came from the bequest of Abiel Smith, a white businessman who believed in educating black children, and the school bore his name. The black community petitioned the city unsuccessfully for permission to expand the school in 1839. From that time until 1855, black leaders and white abolitionists tried repeatedly to integrate Boston's public schools. When they finally succeeded, a decade before the end of the Civil War, the Smith School closed. The school building's exterior was restored by the city in 1977.

After the Civil War, the first large migration of blacks from the south brought so many new people to Boston that the Afro-American community began to spread significantly beyond Beacon Hill. As trains and streetcars spread outward from the center of the city, middle-class whites and then blacks moved into the first ring of suburbs, including Roxbury. Meanwhile, Beacon Hill changed gradually from a black to a white neighborhood, and the African Meeting House was sold by its few remaining members to the Congregation Libavitz, an Orthodox Jewish group. It served as a synagogue until the early 1970's. When that congregation also dwindled, the old Meeting House was purchased by the Museum of Afro-American History for restoration.

As the oldest remaining black church building in the United States, the African Meeting House has been designated a National Historic Landmark. It has become a gathering place for tour groups who walk Bos-



ton's second historic trail—the Black Heritage Trail on Beacon Hill and downtown Boston, developed recently by the Museum of Afro-American History. That trail links the Meeting House and the Abiel Smith School with 14 other important landmarks of local and national black history.

In some cases, the sites belong to both the Freedom Trail and the Black Heritage Trail, since blacks participated in key events of the American Revolution. The best-known black patriot was Crispus Attucks, the first of five persons to die in the Boston Massacre outside the Old State House after he shouted, "Kill the dogs! Knock them over!" at a group of British soldiers. The Boston Massacre Monument which commemorates the event was erected in 1888 by the city's black citizens.

As the Black Heritage Trail's starting point, the African Meeting House harbors the permanent exhibit of 18th and 19th century historical artifacts of the Museum of Afro-American History. The main sanctuary of the Meeting House, with the original pews still in place despite a fire that damaged the building in 1973, also provides a meeting place for black community groups of the present day. "We can architecturally restore the Meeting House to its 19th century appearance," said museum president Byron Rushing after its purchase, "but we

are positive that the spirits of our ancestors will not be satisfied until we restore their and our building into a 20th century Meeting House for black people."

With the Meeting House, the Museum of Afro-American History gained the first of its two permanent headquarters. Organized in 1964 by a group of interested Bostonians including Howard Thurman, the eminent black dean of the Boston University's Marsh Chapel, the Museum operated for several years with part-time volunteers in borrowed and rented space. From the early days its philosophy has embraced the idea of using history to help people understand the present and determine the future. A recent statement of the Museum's purposes and programs said, "The African-American historical organization that defines success by its support within the black community must make a tangible contribution to the improvement, health and liberation of that community. Its program should anticipate the future and be as grounded in the always changing present as it is in the past."

For that reason, the directors knew from the Museum's founding days that they could not focus exclusively on Beacon Hill, where the proud past has given way to an affluent present that includes very few blacks. Today, Boston's black population is centered in Roxbury and the South End—two neighborhoods that changed in the 19th century from sparsely-settled farmland to pleasant country estates



and then, at the turn of the century, to densely-populated neighborhoods whose architecture includes a mixture of triple-decker frame houses, divided-up estate mansions, small single-family houses, row houses and brick apartment buildings erected in place of original estate houses as they were torn down. Virtually no new construction occurred between 1910 and 1960, and more recent building in Roxbury and the South End has been limited largely to urban renewal public housing projects.

These neighborhoods were built neither by nor for black people. They were the first suburbs of Boston, settled by whites who moved on to more distant suburbs early in the century, leaving Roxbury and the South End to absorb the huge migration of blacks from the South. Today, these neighborhoods reflect the poverty that so many blacks have had to endure in the nation's cities.

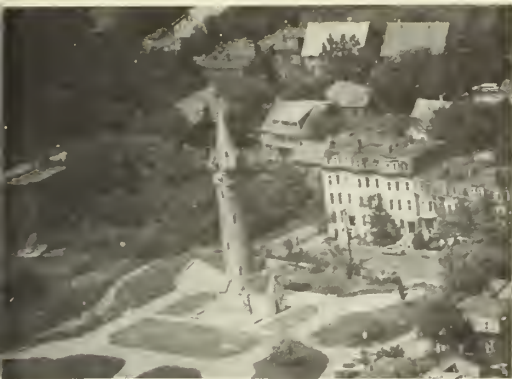
The Museum of Afro-American History chose Roxbury for its second headquarters in order to implement its philosophy of relating past, present and future to each other. In 1974, the Museum sought and received help for its Roxbury activities in the form of a \$50,000 grant from the City Options program of the National Endowment for the Arts. With these funds, the Museum initiated a survey of four Roxbury neighborhoods seeking en-

hanced neighborhood pride by looking for symbols that people identified with their communities. In one neighborhood, the symbol people loved was a Victorian Gothic water tower, or standpipe, that stands high on a hill overlooking all of Boston. In another area, John Eliot Square and its surrounding structures, including an 1804 church and its 1750 rectory, were identified by residents as the area's most significant symbols. A third neighborhood's residents cited a vast park and zoo designed by Frederick Law Olmsted. The fourth, the newest and most transient of the four areas, failed to produce a consensus about a symbol. The Museum mounted exhibits about the neighborhoods, their symbols, history and architecture. In two neighborhoods, the Museum also took action to preserve the symbols and adapt them for use.

The standpipe is located on Fort Hill, named for the High Fort that stood there to defend Boston from British forces during the American Revolution. This high point had very practical benefits for the Boston Water Authority in 1869. By constructing the standpipe there, the Authority could pump water into the tower for storage until it was needed in households at high elevations around Fort Hill. Together, the standpipe and the pumping station cost the city \$100,000, yet they were only used for a few years before being abandoned.

In 1911, the Roxbury Historical Society called upon Boston Mayor John "Honey Fitz" Fitzgerald, grandfather of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy,





for financial help in restoring the standpipe and converting it to an observatory. At its completion in 1917, visitors could gaze over the city and contemplate Revolutionary history with the aid of bronze plaques commemorating the various battlegrounds visible from the handsome wrought-iron balcony added to the tower during restoration. At the time, Mayor Fitzgerald wrote: "The location is one which has become dear to the public by reason of the historical traditions surrounding it, and it will be an improvement to be enjoyed by the residents of the entire city." Over the years after that, however, the standpipe again fell into disrepair, until in 1975 it was in danger of demolition.

Having documented the standpipe's importance as a symbol of Roxbury residents, the Museum of Afro-American History led a campaign to save it. With Endowment funding, the Museum printed leaflets calling on citizens to "Save the Stand Pipe." One leaflet included a 1917 article detailing the structure's history and the story of its restoration as an observatory. Another brochure consisted of a cut-out model of the standpipe and a detachable postcard addressed to Mayor Kevin White on which people could convey to City Hall the simple message, "Dear Mayor, SAVE THE STANDPIPE!" After receiving hundreds of such postcards, Mayor White agreed in 1977 to use city and federal funds to restore the standpipe again. On completion, it will serve as the focal point of Roxbury walking tours. The

ground-floor room will exhibit the Museum of Afro-American History's changing displays relating to Roxbury and black history.

The Museum's other major restoration project in Roxbury has provided its own permanent center in that community. The Dillaway-Thomas House, rectory of the First Church on John Eliot Square, served as headquarters for patriot troops under command of General John Thomas during the Revolution; later, it was a residence until 1930, when the Roxbury Historical Society prevailed on Mayor Curley to restore it and lease it to the Society. Both the Society and the house were abandoned in the 1960's. Its 1977-78 rehabilitation has been a cooperative effort involving the Museum, Boston's Redevelopment Authority and Public Facilities Department, and a non-profit activist organization called the Roxbury Action Program. In April 1978, just before a scheduled transfer of title from the city to the Museum, a fire of suspicious origin seriously damaged the structure. Both the city and the Museum vowed afterwards to go on with the restoration despite this serious setback.





The Museum's permanent Roxbury headquarters in the Dillaway-Thomas house will facilitate continuation of an archeology program it has recently undertaken both there and at the Beacon Hill African Meeting House site. Under this program, children in the Boston public schools dig for clues to the lifestyles and occupations of earlier generations. Trash pits at the Meeting House site have produced a rich harvest of objects which have made history come alive for the children. Digging in Roxbury has been less productive so far, but seems to be equally intriguing for its participants.

The Museum of Afro-American History received a second grant from the National Endowment for the Arts in 1976. With \$20,000 of Endowment funds, the Museum has begun a comprehensive effort to tie together all of Roxbury's important historical sites in a network which will help residents to "look continually at their neighborhood in new and fresh ways," according to Museum president Byron Rushing. The result will be another self-guiding trail; this one will combine historical sites important to Roxbury with sites illustrating black life there in the present, and—in an innovative approach—sites whose primary importance still lies ahead. By pointing out areas where critical choices must be made, the Museum hopes to involve residents in planning for Roxbury's future.



One such site is Dudley Station, a stop on Boston's rapid transit system. Built in 1901, the large station building dominates its neighborhood along with the elevated track it serves. It recently functioned also as temporary headquarters for the Museum of Afro-American History. The Museum publicized the station's importance through a public-awareness program called "What Time Is This Station?" The Museum seeks designation of the station and its surroundings as a historic district on the National Register of Historic Places.

In the 1980's Dudley Station will cease to serve rapid rail passengers. The transit system is scheduled for rerouting to cleared but unused highway right-of-way—a legacy from the successful fight to stop Interstate 95 from cutting through Boston. Rushing sees the move as an opportunity for creative planning in the Dudley Station area; he expects the Museum to be involved in the planning process, and to work for adaptive-reuse of the station building itself. Some Bosto-



nians even envision retention of the elevated track structure for use as a bikeway—an idea that intrigues Rushing, although the Museum has taken no position on it.

The casual observer would not yet notice significant evidence of rebirth in Roxbury. Demolition, vandalism and gradual aging of the community's 19th-century structures continue, although Rushing believes that recent rehabilitation efforts and new construction projects are beginning to balance these losses. He notices a slight increase in lenders' willingness to invest in Roxbury, particularly when government subsidies or guarantees are available. He sees his institution's role as helping to create an atmosphere of caring about Roxbury, a necessary prerequisite to the reversal of Roxbury's downward economic and aesthetic slide.

The Museum of African Art's most recent grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, a \$14,000 stipend from the Livable Cities grant-ing category for 1978, will allow exterior design work for the spaces around the African Meeting House on Beacon Hill. Thus the Museum will continue to balance its activities in these two sharply contrasting but, for black Bostonians, equally important parts of the city. It seems a wise policy, since only by tying together the past and the present, the most prized area of the city with the too-often-forgotten black neighborhoods to the south, will Boston become a livable city for all its residents.

Downtowns





Galveston

In the history of American cities, culture has followed economic affluence as it did in Galveston at the turn of the century. In recent years, we have seen a reversal of that trend as the arts, with precious little money, have stimulated new hope and economic activity.

Emily Whiteside, Executive Director
Galveston County Cultural Arts Council

What is wanted is neither a staged tourist set nor a museum, but an area which Galvestonians and visitors alike frequent because of its vitality, variety of uses and activities, changing composition, close ties to the rest of Galveston . . . and always, the particular beauty and worth of its grand 19th century buildings.

Peter Brink, Executive Director
Galveston Historical Foundation

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alvestonians are painfully aware that years of economic stagnation and decline adversely affect every aspect of a city's life—its social institutions, its cultural activities, and its physical environment. After passing through many such years, Galveston is recovering, finding a new life and rekindling elements of the old. Ironically, the city's current renaissance is symbolized in the restoration of buildings and neighborhoods whose very survival into the 1970's probably would not have been possible had the city continued to thrive without interruption in earlier times.

For the National Endowment for the Arts, it is especially gratifying to note the leading role that the arts have played in Galveston's restoration effort—and indeed, in its entire reawakening. The Endowment has aided the city's efforts with small grants—the first amounted to only \$8,000—that have stimulated rehabilitation efforts involving private investments many times larger.

The earliest settlement at Galveston was a rough collection of tents pitched between 1836 and 1838 and known as “Sacarappa.” That name lives on today on the masthead of the Galveston Historical Foundation's bi-monthly newspaper. Between the early days and now, the island city was known by several nicknames, including the “Queen City of the Southwest” and the “New York of the Gulf.” These appellations were earned by Galveston's shippers, financiers, insurers and wholesale merchants—especially cotton brokers—who made her one of the leading ports in the nation. Goods of every type passed across Galveston's wharves and along the railroad tracks that linked the city with Chicago and other points north.

If Galveston was the hub of Texas and the Gulf, The Strand was the hub of Galveston. A street named after The Strand of London, Galveston's Strand is one block away from the docks on sheltered Galveston Bay. The Strand (or, less elegantly, “Avenue B” on the earliest city plat) therefore quickly became the city's business district. By the 1880's, five blocks were occupied by what has been called “one of the finest concentrations of 19th-century commercial architecture in the country.”

Most Strand buildings were constructed of brick with cast-iron facades, elaborate decoration and broad wooden canopies above the ground floor to protect pedestrians and outdoor merchants from the elements. Many remain standing today, though by the time local citizens saw their potential for restoration in the early 1970's, the canopies and much decorative detail were missing, and gen-



eral deterioration was evident. Because of the high volume of financial transactions that took place in these buildings—\$38 million worth in 1881 alone—The Strand became known as the “Wall Street of the West.” Cross streets intersecting The Strand provided quarters for numerous restaurants, theatres and two opera houses.

The Strand's fortunes were reversed by a combination of man-made technological changes and an Act of God. In the 1890's Houston developed rail links with important northern cities, competing successfully with Galveston for trade and traffic. Galveston itself nearly disappeared in a 1900 hurricane that is still considered to be the nation's worst natural disaster. Over 6,000 people lost their lives, but most Strand buildings survived because of their sturdy construction and their fortuitous location on the leeward side of the island. Soon afterwards, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers began constructing a nine-mile-long seawall and raising the island's ground level by seven feet in a dozen years of pumping in fill from the Bay. Owners of surviving buildings either raised them on stilts and filled in beneath, or they simply filled around them, burying their bottom stories. New buildings were built on the higher grade.

Galveston failed, however, to regain the prosperity it had known before 1900. In the 1920's, Houston again took the growth that Galveston might have expected, as a new ship channel opened limitless possibilities for the port of Houston. Galveston settled into decades of stagnation, while The Strand's commercial buildings and the fine Victorian homes nearby grew seedy around the edges. Some were demolished.

In 1972, an impetus for the revitalization of Galveston came from an unexpected source—the Galveston County Cultural Arts Council. Founded in 1970 to foster the visual and performing arts in Galveston, the Council eventually expanded its focus, working to create an urban setting in which the arts could thrive. In 1971, recalled the Council's executive director Emily Whiteside in Congressional testimony, “it soon became clear that if the arts organizations were going to survive in Galveston, then a healthier cultural and economic climate would have to be recreated in which they could grow and be sustained as they had in the past.”

“It was also apparent,” she continued, “that the Arts Council should be reorganized to include not only the arts, but also representatives of business, government, education, religion, minority, preservation and civic groups—all sharing the same interest—a more livable city.”

The Arts Council began this ambitious task by locating its own headquarters on The Strand. Galveston's Junior League, already alert to the value of The Strand's commercial architecture, had restored two Strand



structures between 1969 and 1971. When in 1972 the Arts Council sought inexpensive space for studios, workshops and classrooms, one of these buildings had exactly what the Council needed—large, high-ceilinged, well-lighted rooms available at a reasonable rent. It opened as the Arts Center on The Strand in June 1972, aided then and since by grants from the Expansion Arts program of the National Endowment for the Arts. In a typical two-month period at the Arts Center, Galveston residents can choose among courses in ceramics, metal work and jewelry-making, photography and film making, painting, sculpture, printmaking, weaving, dance, creative writing, and—for children—an interdisciplinary program called “Introduction to the Arts.”

The immediate success of the Arts center encouraged the Council to move on in 1973 toward its broader goal of bringing an economic and cultural renaissance to The Strand as a whole. With an \$8,000 matching grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Council conducted a study to learn how to go about restoring the entire five-block area and encouraging the adaptation of The Strand’s commercial buildings for a variety of uses including shops, restaurants, apartments, art galleries and offices. It would also be important, Council members thought, to retain the active wholesale businesses already operating on The Strand.

The study team consisted of nationally-known experts in historic preservation, design, urban affairs, law and economics. The group conducted on-site inspections and made recommendations for The Strand and its important individual buildings. They mapped out a preliminary implementation strategy.

What happened next is especially remarkable for its magnitude in dollars and accomplishments, growing as it did out of the very small Endowment investment of \$8,000. The Arts Council worked with the Galveston Historical Foundation to create a revolving fund for the purchase and resale of Strand buildings. As a tax-exempt, nonprofit preservation organization, the Historical Foundation was in a position to attract funding from other foundations (and, later, bits and pieces of government money) and to handle the economic, legal and planning aspects of The Strand’s restoration.

The Kempner Fund of Galveston soon donated \$15,000 of seed money so the Historical Foundation could hire Peter Brink, an attorney with prior preservation experience, as executive director and overseer of the Strand Project. The Moody Foundation, another philanthropic group created by an old Galveston business family, committed \$200,000 which became the core of the Historical Foundation’s Strand Revolving Fund. The Historical Foundation quickly and quietly purchased options on five Strand buildings, acting anonymously through a trustee to avoid the instant price inflation that preservationists have invariably found when their interest in an area becomes known.

From this beginning, the Historical Foundation built a \$1 million line of credit for long-term financing with a consortium of Galveston lending insti-

tutions. One by one, GHF bought Strand buildings, attached restrictive covenants to their deeds, and resold them to developers who agreed to the deed restrictions. Buyers promised not to demolish the buildings or alter their exteriors without the Foundation's approval. They agreed to maintain structural soundness. Most important to the Historical Foundation's revitalization efforts, they committed themselves to restore the buildings' facades and develop interiors for uses that would contribute to the new Strand ambience and activity.

In taking this case-by-case approach, the Galveston Historical Foundation departed from preservation techniques previously used in Galveston's historic residential areas. In the historic East End, for example, the entire area benefitted from designation by the city as a historic district based on a survey and development plan prepared by the Foundation. That meant that all new construction, demolition and exterior restoration of existing structures in the East End had to be approved by the Historic District Board, an unpaid citizen committee which sought to keep these changes in harmony with the many excellent examples of Victorian residential architecture there.

Preservationists also sought to have The Strand designated as a historic district in 1971. The Strand failed to win city council approval because of opposition from a number of wholesale businesses and other property owners in the commercial area. Owners feared that the restrictions and the lack of specific guidelines for the Historic District Board to use in determining compatibility between proposed developments and existing buildings might scare investors and lenders away and impinge on their freedom to do busi-

ness. Consequently, the Historical Foundation has not sought historic district designation for The Strand since the revolving fund was established. The Strand was listed, however, on the National Register of Historic Places in 1971 and became a National Historic Landmark District in 1976.

By 1977, \$4 million in private investment had been committed to the purchase, restoration and development of Strand buildings. Peter Brink, executive director of the Galveston Historical Foundation, carefully stretched revolving fund monies to handle more and more buildings; 18 had been rehabilitated by 1977. Whenever possible, the Foundation acted as a broker rather than a purchaser. Sometimes this simply meant bringing sellers and buyers together and negotiating for commitments to restrictive covenants. At other times the Foundation purchased options on buildings, found new permanent owners, and assigned the options to these buyers with acceptance of the covenants as a condition of the assignment. (This method was used with the first five buildings restored on The Strand.) In still other cases, buildings did not change hands at all, but Brink successfully convinced owners to attach new deed restrictions to their properties in exchange for a few thousand dollars of the Historical





Foundation's funds, city grant funds (to be used for reconstruction of wooden canopies), or access to long-term financing from the lending consortium for agreed-upon exterior renovation measures.

At first, buildings were resold at slight losses. This deliberate decision enabled the Historical Foundation to reduce the risk faced by The Strand's first prospective new businessmen and select those committing themselves to occupy or lease their buildings immediately. This way, The Strand project began to multiply in effect at the earliest possible time and the preservationist group avoided inadvertent sales to speculators.

The potential of Strand buildings has stimulated dramatic architectural adaptations of large warehouse spaces in many Strand buildings for apartments, shops, restaurants and offices. Design firms involved in The Strand include Ford, Powell & Carson of San Antonio, Taft Architects of Houston, Oliver and Bierman of Galveston and Hardy, Holzman and Pfeiffer of New York.

Brink and his colleagues also recognized the need to integrate the individual buildings into a well-designed, cohesive plan for The Strand as a whole, and to create "linkages" in turn between The Strand and its surroundings, including Galveston's wharf area. In 1974, using another matching grant from the National Endowment for the Arts—this one for \$42,000—The Galveston Historical Foundation hired the Philadelphia planning and architectural firm of Venturi and Rauch to assist a Strand Planning Committee in creating a de-

tailed *Action Plan for the Strand*. The resulting Plan demonstrates an unusually broad sensitivity not only to The Strand's aesthetic value and potential, but also to important economic, practical and social concerns. Among the goals spelled out by Venturi and Rauch, for example, was that of minimizing adverse impacts of Strand restoration on existing businesses both there and nearby.

The planners also counseled flexibility in the Foundation's attitude toward construction of "infill development" where demolition had taken its toll in the 1950's and 1960's. While new construction should maintain Strand height and frontage lines and first-floor activities should enhance the spirit of The Strand, the Plan said, the existing constraints on new construction "should not be intensified by too strict aesthetic controls on new development, or this will sap its vitality." Further, "harmony with the existing structures can be achieved through maintaining either a distinct contrast or a close similarity in scale, texture, proportions or materials. It is not so much whether a building is different from or analogous to other Strand structures as whether its design and details make its neighbors look mean and dingy or grand and mellow."

Even in the restoration of the older buildings, the *Action Plan* called for a vital eclecticism, since "a Williamsburg-like historical accuracy throughout is inappropriate to an active, multi-purpose street, and indeed would be unattainable in terms of cost and restrictions upon private development." To achieve the desired effect, the Plan continued, "Strand developers should strive to restore street facades authentically, but otherwise they should use historical imagery artistically and symbolically. Restoration of interiors should be artful but impressionistic, as in the



Roman palazzo with a stunning modern bar under the awning on the ground floor. Juxtaposing the new and vital with the old and symbolic will help The Strand to become not a museum but a real place that enhances the life of Galveston's citizens and dramatizes the experience of its visitors."

Venturi and Rauch recommended the use of harmonious but colorful signs in front of Strand buildings; Victorian gaslights were already being installed. They called for use of blank storefront windows in wholesale and warehouse buildings as display areas to depict the Strand's past and its current restoration; the exhibits would also eliminate visual gaps between retail businesses with lively street facades. In vacant lots they called for parks and trees—the latter to be planted in flat, close lines "to form a visual wall at the building line." Sidewalks, they said, should be repaved in brick or unglazed tile similar to the original 19th-century materials. Benches should be placed at convenient points along the sidewalk for pedestrians' convenience, and shopkeepers should use the sidewalks as extensions for their shops, displaying goods in outside barrels and crates.

While all this restoration activity was progressing, the Galveston County Cultural Arts Council continued to take critical steps toward making The Strand a center of artistic activity as well as a commercial success. In addition to the programs of the Arts Center on the Strand, the

Council began to sponsor an annual Festival on the Strand, partially funded by matching grants from the National Endowment for the Arts' "Expansion Arts" program. The Festival brings musicians, artists, dancers and theatre companies to perform or display their works both indoors and out in The Strand area, attracting several thousand tourists and Galveston residents.

Another major annual event, "Dickens' Evening on the Strand," is sponsored by the Galveston Historical Foundation each December. On that occasion The Strand becomes the 19th-century London of Charles Dickens, with costumed merrymakers, performances of *A Christmas Carol*, strolling carolers, roasted chestnuts and wassail cups.

From the beginning of The Strand preservation project, the Arts Council never lost sight of one of its most cherished goals—to purchase and restore the city's magnificent Grand Opera House and thereby provide Galveston with a first-rate performing arts hall and civic center. The Grand, built in 1894, is located only three blocks from The Strand. The historic theatre building includes the old Grand Hotel, which provided lodging and dining for both performers and theatregoers. Although damaged in the 1900 hurricane, the Opera House was used continuously for 80 years—first for live performances, and later as a movie house. Records of its first season document the diverse culture and entertainment it offered to Galvestonians—classical music by the Galveston Quartette Society; dramas ranging from "Lady Windermere's Fan" to "Ten Nights in a Bar Room;" operas such as "Car-





men," "Tannhauser" and "Pagliacci;" sounds of the United States Marine Band; and readings from historical and literary works. Later seasons included such attractions as John Philip Sousa's band and the fiery oratory of William Jennings Bryan. A review in the *Galveston Daily News* of the very first performance described the interior of the Opera House as "rich and gorgeous in every detail . . . the grandest temple of Thespis to be found in the broad confines of Texas or the Southwest."

Much of this grandeur was unfortunately lost during the several decades when the Grand served as a movie house. But the building's enduring structural soundness encouraged the Arts Council to buy it for restoration in 1974 with grants from the Houston Endowment and the Kempner Fund. This initial funding also went toward a phased master plan for the Opera House which was prepared by Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates of New York. The first step they recommended was the modernization of the stage and backstage, so that live performances could be resumed as quickly as possible. Ultimately, the entire auditorium, lobby, exterior facade and surroundings will be returned to elegance.

The master plan also recommended conversion of the old Grand Hotel to a mixture of commercial, artistic and residential uses which could complement the performing arts activities and bring in revenues to help support the Opera House. A \$17,500 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to the Arts Council is now providing a more detailed feasibility study of the hotel renovation.

The Arts Council is progressing well on a major capital fund-raising drive to finance the complete Grand Opera House restoration; already, over \$1 million has come from foundations, individual gifts and corporate grants. Even though the Grand does not yet offer ideal performing conditions, it is used on several occasions each year, including the Festival on the Strand, for musical, dramatic and dance productions. It was dedicated by the Arts Council to the people of Galveston County at a three-day gala celebration in August 1974.

The Historical Foundation also continues to expand its dreams and accomplishments. With continuing financial support from the Moody Foundation, the Texas Historical Commission, the U.S. Department of the Interior, the city's Community Development Block Grants and other sources, preservation work spreads to Pier 19 on Galveston Bay, to buildings on other nearby streets and to the Santa Fe Railroad Terminal at the head of The Strand.

The Grand and The Strand represent the best of Galveston—the living spirit that has endured depression, neglect, and destruction and emerged as the soul of a truly livable city of the late 20th century.





Troy

There is no phase of our history that is more uniquely American than the phenomenon that caused the conversion of an agrarian society into the industrial powerhouse of the world; a period when wave after wave of immigration created a multi-ethnic society unique in the history of the world...

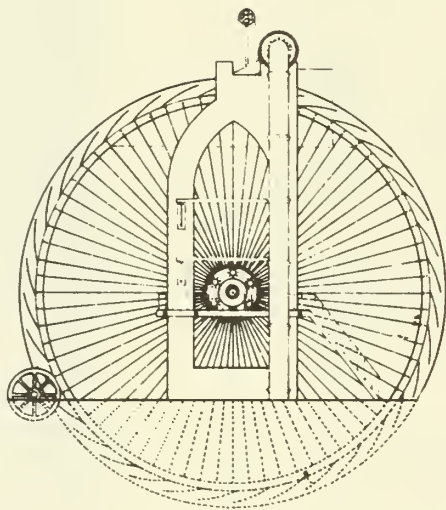
As the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers and the Erie Canal historically nurtured and linked a network of urban developments across the State of New York and opened the door to the westward expansion of the United States, so too can they be seen as linking a modern network of urban cultures and opening the door to economic and social revitalization based on the redevelopment of historic urban environmental resources.

Hudson Mohawk Industrial Gateway,
"Proposal for a Hudson-Mohawk Urban
Cultural Park"

As the historic preservation movement has embraced commercial history in Galveston and low-income neighborhoods in Savannah, it has taken yet another direction in New York State. In the area surrounding the confluence of the Hudson and Mohawk rivers, sensitive private citizens and public officials recognize the historic importance and present potential of their region's legacy of 19th-century industrial buildings and sites. By using these industrial relics to promote tourism and spread knowledge of past Hudson-Mohawk manufacturing enterprises, residents of six communities—including Troy—hope to help create a climate in which new investment will end their recent years as "economic backwaters" (as FORTUNE magazine has described them). They hope, too, that "adaptive reuse" of old factory buildings will be a central part of the Troy area's revitalization.

Upstate Industrial Archaeology. In 1972, the regents of the University of the State of New York chartered a new organization dedicated to using historical industrial resources for the revitalization of the Troy area. Called the Hudson Mohawk Industrial Gateway, the group functions as a non-profit educational corporation. In 1973, the Gateway received a \$40,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts—supplemented with funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and private sources—for an extensive study of the region's industrial heritage and its possible revitalization through recognition and adaptation of industrial remnants. The study was coordinated by the Albany architectural firm of Mendel Mesick Cohen, using a team consisting of an architectural historian, two architects, and an economist, who together represented a new discipline called "industrial archaeology."

Unlike scholars who dig in the dirt for relics of ancient civilizations, industrial archaeologists work primarily with above-ground ruins of the period when the industrial revolution was transforming American civilization. Their basic goal, however, conforms with that motivating other archaeologists—to understand, through physical remains, the diverse forces which shaped the total society of the period under study. FORTUNE magazine recognized the importance of industrial archaeology in its article about Troy, noting that "these [industrial] rem-



nants are now being recognized as monuments of American technology—as worthy of attention as the stately old homes and gracious ways of life that the decayed factories made possible.”

Like so many American cities, Troy grew because its location offered water for both power and transportation. The Mohawk and Hudson rivers meet at Troy, and early 19th-century engineers expanded the usefulness of these natural waterways by connecting them by canal with Lake Champlain to the north and Lake Erie to the west. Waterwheels for industrial power sprouted along these rivers; a wheel built at Troy’s Burden Iron Works was the largest and most powerful in the world.

The region’s leading industries were iron and steel; the Bessemer process was first introduced to American steelmaking in Troy, and only Pittsburgh had a larger steel output. Other products included stoves, valves, cotton textiles, ships, fire hydrants, clothing (especially detachable cuffs and collars), railroad cars, paints, paper, bricks, bells and armaments. Henry Burden, an enterprising Scottish immigrant who took over the Troy Iron and Nail Company and organized a new iron company which bore his name, also played a crucial but little-known role in the Civil War by stamping out thousands of horse-shoes for the Union Army with a special machine he had invented. Another area firm, the Corning, Winslow and Company, rolled the iron plates for the *U.S.S. Monitor*.

These industries influenced every facet of life in the region. Companies often provided their worker’s housing, schools, recreation halls, and even churches. They also offered employ-

ment to graduates of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute at Troy, which emerged in 1824 as the nation’s first engineering school. As their labor needs increased, the region’s factories absorbed thousands of European immigrants. The growing population fed varied support services in turn; they included firefighting, waterworks and the manufacture and distribution of natural gas for lighting.

Today, only a few of the Hudson-Mohawk factories are operating in their original manner, yet many remain standing as tributes to the past. The decline of industry in the region resulted from the Depression, a lack of innovation and leadership, outdated plants and capital equipment, unionization and rising labor costs (which drove the textile companies southward), a shift away from water-based power and transportation, and other changes in markets and sources of raw materials.

The region includes a number of different political jurisdictions—the cities of Troy, Cohoes and Watervliet, and the towns and villages of Green Island and Waterford, in the counties of Albany, Rensselaer and Saratoga—and until the Hudson Mohawk Industrial Gateway was born, no mechanism existed for these communities to join together to stimulate economic development through adaptation and reuse of 19th-century industrial facilities.



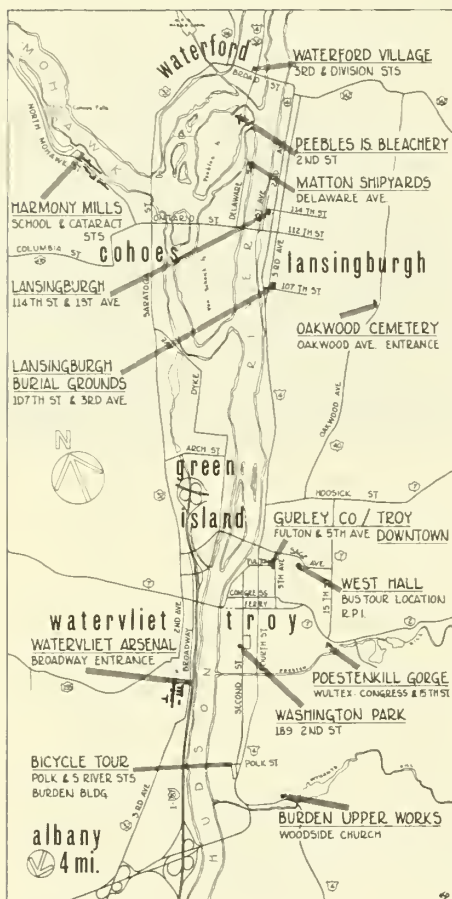
Even before beginning the Endowment-funded study, the Gateway published a guide book, *Industrial Archeology in Troy, Waterford, Cohoes, Green Island and Watervliet*, offering photographs and brief historical and architectural descriptions of 46 industrial sites in Troy, nine in Waterford, 16 in Cohoes, six in Green Island and four in Watervliet. The study team returned to each site to investigate its present condition, use, ownership and value, and to expand The Gateway's documentation of its historic and architectural importance. Additionally, the group looked at each building's potential for reuse and at threats of demolition or irreparable decay. More detailed research on certain buildings, such as the Burden Iron Works Office Building and the Troy Gaslight Company's Gasholder House, led to publication of a series of monographs.

Study Recommendations. The study produced two basic recommendations: that the region be developed as a tourism and educational resource, so that the public might appreciate the industrial foundation on which the area grew, and that as many as possible of the remaining buildings be rehabilitated for modern uses. By 1977, much progress had been made in implementing the former, while the challenge of the latter remained to be fulfilled.

The Gateway began promoting public visits to historic industrial sites by planning a tourist route to encompass the important landmarks in the five communities, and publishing maps and guides for the tour network. Later, the Gateway began sponsoring walking, bus and bicycle tours and dinner boat cruises in the area. By 1977, more than 60 organized tours were being conducted annually.

The organization also sought a place where tourists could attend exhibits, slide shows and lectures interpreting the Hudson-Mohawk industrial heritage. In 1974 the Republic Steel Corporation, heir to the Burden Iron Works, donated the Burden office building and two acres of surrounding property to the Gateway. The organization immediately decided to implement the study group's idea and renovate the 1881 Queen Anne style office building to serve as the Gateway's orientation center and headquarters. As such, it would become the first industrial building to be restored by the group for contemporary use.

The Mendel Mesick Cohen firm's study team had found a wealth of information to help with the Burden building's restoration. Detailed accounting ledgers from the iron company's files documented each step in the building's construction, and newspapers of the 1880's described the finished structure. Outside, according to the *Troy Daily Times* of December 16, 1882, the brick facade was decorated with "pressed brick trimmings distributed in tasty and unique designs" and with arched windows of "cathedral glass," and was topped by a gabled red tile roof and cupola. The interior was seen by the reporter as equally unique with its cherry paneling "polished to a remarkable degree of perfection," its grand reception room—"perhaps the most gorgeous interior of its kind in this part of the state"—its high ceil-



ings, skylights, glowing coal fireplaces, and its open plan with individual work spaces delineated by partitions and cherry railings rather than full walls. Even the decoration of company officers' rooms clearly surprised the visitor, as "Turkish rugs, brass gas fixtures, tastily curtained windows and other features produce an air of elegance that is seldom enjoyed outside of a mansion." All these facts went into a monograph published by the Gateway.

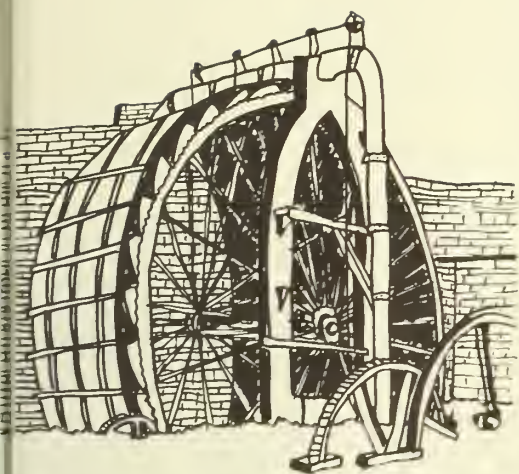
The Burden office building was stripped of all its interior splendor sometime during Republic Steel's tenure of ownership, and today's prices for cherry wood and other finishing items prohibit a full restoration of these details. But the rehabilitated structure will retain the basic floor plan of the building and will provide an interesting place for visitors to begin their explorations of Hudson-Mohawk industrial relics. The Gateway group will also shore up the ruins of portions of the iron works proper (most of which was dismantled for scrap during World War II), and hopes eventually to build a replica of the original waterwheel for tourists to view.

Peebles Island. Not far from the Burden site lies Peebles Island, where the Hudson and Mohawk rivers actually meet. There, the Cluett Peabody Company processed cotton cloth beginning in 1910 and invented the famous sanforizing process in

1928. When the plant closed in 1972, the state of New York purchased the site and the massive factory buildings with the idea of demolishing the bleachery and developing park and recreational facilities there. Gateway studies led the State to reconsider its plans to raze the factory.

The study team explored several possibilities for adaptive reuse of the Cluett Peabody bleachery, concluding that a museum would fit well into the vast building with its dramatically-skylighted interior. But recognizing that such an ambitious project would be expensive and difficult to effect and that total demolition was an imminent danger, the researchers alternatively proposed removal of all but the building's walls and regrading of the basement level to create an open-air theatre that would retain the structure's basic appearance. Meanwhile, the state's Division for Historic Preservation began using the bleachery's ancillary structures for preservation laboratories, shops and storage areas. In 1977, the adaptation of the still-vacant bleachery itself remained a project for the future, but the demolition threat had disappeared.

The Gateway study team learned the hard way that events often do not wait for preservation proposals when demolition and new construction have already been planned. The group found particularly interesting commercial possibilities in Watervliet's former Meneely Bell Foundry, where bells of world-famous quality and tone were cast for 100 years beginning in the second half of the 19th century. The basilica-like foundry building, combined with the nearby Meneely mansion, union hall and workers' houses—and supplemented with compatible new construction—could provide a shopping center equal in size to a totally new retail plaza pro-



posed for that location by the city's urban renewal agency, which owned the site. The Gateway group's final report to the Endowment said, "As an example of selective redevelopment of a blighted urban area, these plans attempted to foster a sense of continuity by combining the historical with the new." But, the report continued, "The urban renewal agency . . . could not find cause to alter its administrative procedures so that these historically and architecturally significant buildings could be preserved. Despite the efforts of the Hudson-Mohawk Industrial Gateway and concerned citizens, the foundry building, houses and union hall were cleared for a parking lot, and the Meneely mansion burned and was demolished." In 1977, the Meneely site remained vacant.

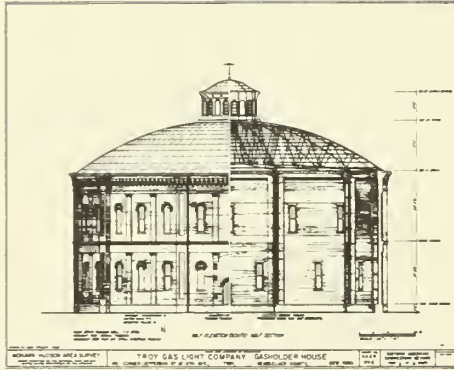
Probably the most ambitious of the Gateway's adaptive use proposals to come out of the Endowment-funded study was the suggested reuse of a two-block row of industrial warehouses along Troy's riverfront. The study team envisioned a 150-room hotel and conference center whose exterior would retain the appearance of 19 distinct but attached buildings, with retail shops on the ground floors. The interior would fea-



ture exposed brick walls and original heavy timber framing, creating an atmosphere that could not be found in an all-new hotel.

Most of the riverfront buildings were privately owned, although several had passed to Troy's urban renewal authority because of non-payment of taxes; they housed low-quality commercial uses (such as bars) on their ground floors, and were largely vacant on the upper storeys. Unfortunately, the city council was not moved by the Gateway's proposal for the river warehouses, and in 1977 the city destroyed six buildings in the middle of the row. One remaining structure continued to decay to the point of possible collapse, while the others appeared stable. The Gateway held to a hope that new commercial investment in Troy's nearby downtown area might create a climate in which preservation and adaptation of the warehouses might still be possible.

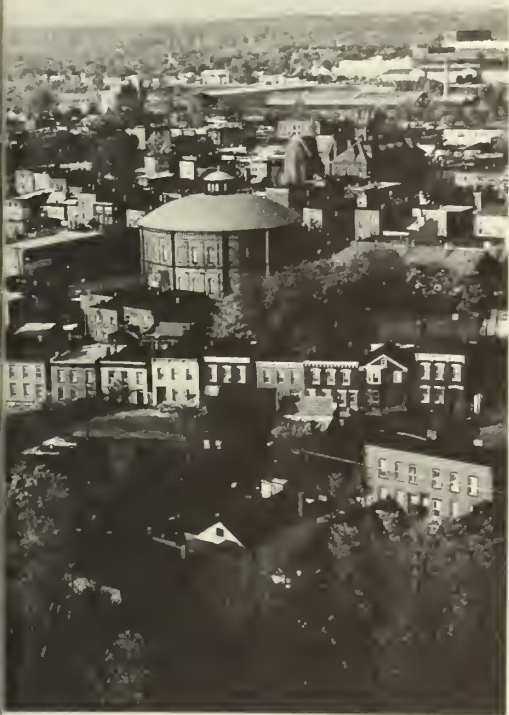
The Hudson-Mohawk Industrial Gateway's interest in the past extends beyond the region's manufacturing enterprises to the public facilities and services which supported Troy's 19th-century industrial economy. It was natural, then, for the group's researchers to look at a number of 19th-century firehouses as structures worthy of preservation and reuse, especially since the city of Troy began in the early 1970's to retire its older fire stations and replace them with modern facilities. The Gateway worked with a neighborhood association and the city government to convert one firehouse into a community center, and developed plans for reuse of two others as a restaurant and a recreation center, respectively.



Next came a look at relics of the 19th-century utilities. Beginning with the founding of the Troy Gas Light Company in 1848, gas manufactured from coal illuminated the city's streets, stores, public buildings and residences. Because the gas company's "peak load" (to use a modern utility term) was in the evening but gas was manufactured throughout the day, take lighting fuel was stored temporarily in giant cylindrical tanks known as gasholders. Later, in Troy and elsewhere, gasholder designs were refined to include an outer shell, a masonry "gasholder house," which protected the tank from winds, storms and extreme temperature changes. Today, Troy's industrial archaeologists look with special appreciation on the Troy gasholder house of 1873, with its highly decorative brick exterior, stone trim, slate roof, interior iron roof trusses, and cupola. The Gateway's published monograph on the gasholder house describes it as "a masterful expression of architectural distinction combined with functional utility." Through careful documentation of the historical and architectural value of this structure, the Gateway has enabled tourists to view an example of this extinct technology and has probably ensured its preservation.

At present, the gasholder house is owned and used for storage by a paint company. Gateway staff members invited the building's owner (along with owners of other historical industrial buildings throughout the Hudson-Mohawk region) to a seminar at which they learned about the significance and potential of their buildings, became acquainted with the Gateway's programs, and heard of successful adaptive restoration efforts involving industrial buildings in other cities.

One of the difficulties faced by the Hudson-Mohawk Industrial Gateway from the start of its efforts was the need to deal separately with seven local governments. With such political fragmentation, it was not possible to approach the industrial heritage project in a regionally coordinated way. Happily, the Gateway convinced all the local governments of the need for cooperative links in their heritage programs. This idea led the New York State Legislature to create, in its 1977 legislative session, an "urban cultural park," highlighting industrial heritage throughout the Hudson-Mohawk area. The new park does not conform to the traditional notion of a park, with green spaces confined within certain boundaries. Rather, it is a network of sites which are joined in a "heritage trail" to provide interesting and educational experiences for visitors. The park will be governed by a commission, a single entity that the Gateway can



deal with in developing the entire region's industrial heritage program. Legislation now pending in the U.S. Congress would establish a number of urban cultural parks across the country, patterned along the lines of the Hudson-Mohawk park and a similar development in Lowell, Massachusetts.

The development of the Hudson-Mohawk's potential as an example of urban revitalization through historic preservation and interpretation has just begun. In the future, the Gateway organization may step up its "adaptive reuse" projects by establishing a revolving fund similar to those used for the revitalization of The Strand in Galveston and the historic district in Savannah. Yet the Gateway has already brought about a marked new appreciation of the Troy area's industrial heritage among area residents and elected officials on the local and state levels. Thomas McGuire, execu-

tive director of the Hudson-Mohawk Industrial Gateway, summed up the progress to date when he testified before the U.S. Congress, reporting that "much has been accomplished in the Hudson-Mohawk area during the past three and a half years that developed because of the initial grant by the National Endowment for the Arts, and would not have happened otherwise. The information base produced by that study, the experiences gained during its progress, and momentum begun have carried the Gateway to a level where the initial ideas are about to be established as policy decisions in the Hudson-Mohawk area."



Fernandina Beach

Fernandina had a lot of plans, a lot of dreams awaiting a great windfall, which came in the form of an Economic Development Administration grant [to implement the downtown master plan]. We feel, however, that the grant behind the grant—the National Endowment for the Arts grant for redesign of our downtown public spaces—was most effective in bringing our dreams to reality.

Don Roberts, Director,
Fernandina Beach Chamber of Commerce

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nticing shoppers back to town centers through enhancement of the exterior environment was the ultimate goal behind a \$35,000 Arts Endowment grant to one small southern town.

Outside Florida, Fernandina is not exactly a household word. This community of 8,000 residents—the seat of Nassau County and the commercial center of Amelia Island—is little known compared with places like Galveston, Milwaukee and Jersey City. Yet small towns like Fernandina share with the nation's leading cities the familiar problem of dying downtowns.

This problem led the merchants of Fernandina Beach to look for new ways to bring people, investment and amenities back to Centre Street, the heart of Fernandina's business district. Friendly shopkeepers and a valuable collection of turn-of-the-century commercial architecture make shopping there a pleasant social experience, yet Centre Street merchants have struggled to compete with new outlying shopping centers. To meet the competition, Fernandina's merchants have developed and implemented a plan for downtown revitalization that extends well beyond historic preservation to incorporate flexible, adaptive ways of meeting modern shopping needs.

Fernandina's downtown problems came as the latest in a long series of booms, recessions, political upheavals and notorious adventures that have marked the town's history. Unlike any other place in the United States, Fernandina and Amelia Island have been governed under eight flags: French, Spanish, British, Mexican, Confederate, U.S., and—between 1812 and 1817—the respective standards of an obscure group of indigenous "patriots" and of a Scottish soldier of fortune named Sir Gregor MacGregor. The name Fernandina comes from a Spanish fort built nearby in 1686, called San Fernando. Amelia Island itself was named by Georgia's Governor Oglethorpe (who led a scouting expedition there) for Princess Amelia, daughter of England's King George II.

The island lies near the southern end of the chain of barrier isles which stretch from Cape Hatteras, North Carolina to Talbot Island, Florida. This strategic location, at the very northeastern corner of Florida, made Fernandina a natural magnet for shippers, smugglers and pirates during the 18th and early 19th century. The community's nickname, The Buccaneer City, recalls this era. Amelia Island also served as a loyalist haven during the American Revolution, and as an embarkation point for the forced exodus of some 20,000 Tories after the American victory. President Monroe called Fernandina a "festering fleshpot" shortly before it was annexed (with the rest of Florida) to the United States in 1824; Monroe's cleanup expedition was so successful that it wiped out all the illicit sea trade and caused the town's first recession.

Like so many American settlements, Fernandina gained its real start in modern life as a railroad terminus. One of Florida's first two U.S. Senators, a



man named David Yulee, successfully promoted his hometown of Fernandina as the eastern end of the first cross-Florida railroad. This enterprise required moving the town to a new site a few miles from the original settlement to obtain suitable land for the railbed. The railroad—along with Fernandina's warehouses, wharves and shops—barely escaped the Civil War, sustaining heavy damage. After the war the Florida Railroad Company sold out to northern interests, who began rebuilding in 1870.

The railroad soon thrived on trade of lumber, cotton, phosphate, naval stores, and even contraband arms for Cuban rebels during the Spanish-American War. The non-military goods were transferred at Fernandina from ship to rail for transport across the state to the Gulf of Mexico. This boom time also brought travellers and businessmen by steamer from New York, Charleston, Savannah and elsewhere to stay at two magnificent hotels operated by the Florida Railroad Company in Fernandina. The buildings in Fernandina Beach's present central business district date from these golden years between 1875 and 1900.

In the 1920's, Fernandina's fortunes reversed again. New rail lines to Jacksonville and Savannah diverted growth to those cities, leaving Fernandina behind forever. The local economy survived on the new shrimp and oyster industries until the Depression wiped out the market for these delicacies. Recovery came again in the late 1930's when two pulp factories—the Container Corporation of America and the Rayonier Corporation (now an ITT subsidiary)—came to town. Since that time, these two plants have been the mainstay of the Fernandina economy.

Tourism began to show promise as an additional source of jobs, growth

and revenues for Fernandina in the early 1970's. Once again, Amelia Island's location looked beneficial. The Sea Pines Corporation, famous for its resort development at Hilton Head, South Carolina, purchased 3300 acres at the southern tip of the island for a similar development, to be called the Amelia Island Plantation. Proximity to the intracoastal waterway and the main north-south artery of Interstate 95 promised to bring vacationers and permanent residents to the Plantation and—for shopping—to Fernandina Beach.

The Amelia Island Plantation's development was slowed by the recession of the mid-1970's; downtown Fernandina suffered from this and from the competition of a new shopping mall. Centre Street merchants began to fear for their future livelihood and for the survival of the town's central business district. They asked for help from Charles Fraser, chairman of the Sea Pines Corporation, and Fraser put them in touch with the Ohio design firm of Babcock and Schmid, formerly F. Eugene Smith. For \$13,000 raised by the merchants themselves (with a substantial contribution from Fraser), Babcock and Schmid associate David Brewster prepared an outline plan for the revitalization of downtown Fernandina.

Brewster and his colleagues immediately recognized the historical and architectural merits of Fernandina. Above the artless electric signs and



plate-glass windows, and beneath the concealing paint and false fronts, lay a fine collection of intact Victorian commercial buildings. The old railroad depot building (now used as headquarters for the Chamber of Commerce), the 1891 Nassau County Courthouse, and the 1910 Post Office complemented the shop buildings, as did a number of fine Victorian homes and churches nearby. As local citizens and businessmen realized the treasure they possessed, they organized the Amelia Island Fernandina Restoration Foundation and won a place on the National Register of Historic Places for their 30-block downtown area. The Downtown Merchants' Committee of Fernandina Beach's Chamber of Commerce and the Restoration Foundation began advocating implementation of the revitalization plan.

In 1974, a successful application to the National Endowment for the Arts brought a \$34,750 grant to the Restoration Foundation for more detailed downtown planning. With these funds, the designers prepared detailed drawings and specifications for the public spaces of a six-block area of Centre Street. They included provisions for parking, planting and paving, new lighting, street furniture and informational signs with careful attention to graphic design. Utility lines were scheduled for removal to underground. Traffic and parking were to be redirected to a series of alleys and side streets nearby, leaving Centre Street itself as a pedestrian mall.

The design firm also prepared storefront plans to return the historic buildings along Centre Street to a

pleasing appearance in keeping with their Victorian roots. Actual restoration of individual buildings became the responsibility of their owners, who were provided with the plans.

Fernandina merchants saw some practical problems with the plan. They feared that their already-declining businesses would suffer even more from the conversion of Centre Street into a pedestrian mall, knowing of other business districts that had tried—and failed—to separate shoppers from their cars. Negotiations between the designer and his clients led to a compromise plan which would permit two lanes of auto traffic and some on-street parking on Centre Street. Pedestrians would benefit, however, from extensive street scaping made possible by the width reduction of the vehicular portion of the street. The extra space would be designed with extensive plantings, aesthetically pleasing light fixtures and benches. Each of the six blocks to be restored could be traversed on foot by means of a brick crosswalk. A 30% reduction in Centre Street's parking spaces would be more than compensated by new parking facilities in lots and alleys adjacent to Centre Street.





The entire project, as redesigned, was estimated to cost approximately \$1.3 million in actual construction. Clearly, this ambitious undertaking would exceed the public and private financial resources of the Fernandina community, leading the Chamber of Commerce and the Restoration Foundation to appeal for outside help. In stating their case, they said:

Fernandina citizens have the architectural potential, the professional guidance, the intense desire and energetic drive to make a success of the Restoration effort.

It is, however, a community of only about 8,000 year 'round residents, so the financial resources are limited.

For the interest of all Americans—many of whom consider Florida with its Disney World the mecca of wholesome pleasures—we ask a helping hand to swing wide once again the Doorway to Florida, Downtown Fernandina.

Ironically, the national economic problems that contributed to Fernandina's ills may also have provided the key to its recovery. Seeking to put unemployed persons back to work quickly, Congress appropriated funds for public service jobs under the Local Public Works Capital Development Program within the Commerce Department's Economic Development Administration. Fernandina, with its detailed plan completed and ready to go, was in an excellent position to apply for these funds as soon as they became available in the fall of 1976.

In early 1977, the Economic Development Administration approved the town's \$1.3 million grant. An enthusiastic crowd of local residents and merchants, as well as tourists attending the annual shrimp festival, watched groundbreaking ceremonies in April of that year, and completion was scheduled for spring 1978. About 35 persons looked forward to employment for up to a year on the project.

Not all aspects of Fernandina's revitalization were dependent on federal largesse, however. A local ordinance created a Historic District Council empowered to approve or deny all demolition, building, addition, alteration or even exterior painting of buildings within the 30-block historic district. Additionally, the Nassau County Commission undertook a \$200,000 restoration of the 1891 courthouse, which state officials had called "the finest surviving Victorian courthouse in Florida." A few years earlier, the penny-wise county government had come close to demolishing the building's distinctive Italianate tower when it required repairs.

The Amelia Island Plantation also contributed to local (and tourist) appreciation of Fernandina's architectural heritage by publishing a guide for a driving tour of the community's important buildings. Three Victorian homes included in the brochure—of Queen Anne, Gothic Revival and Italianate style, respectively—are individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The ultimate success of the Fernandina project will be measured in the continued economic viability of Centre Street merchants. A few years' time will tell just how much re-



tail business and private investment the revitalization project will stimulate. Fernandina merchants, whose desire to reverse their financial misfortunes stimulated the projects, have watched its progress nervously. Torn-up streets and temporary shortages of parking spaces have hurt business slightly since construction began, but these problems are expected to disappear on completion. Simultaneous strikes at the Container Corporation and ITT-Rayonier plants in fall 1977 further depressed the local retail market for a short time. Nonetheless, optimism among the store-owners can be seen in the facade restoration activities undertaken by those financially able to do so; others are waiting for the expected turnaround in retail sales before altering their buildings in accord with the plans provided by the Babcock and Schmid firm.

From \$13,000 raised locally, followed by \$34,475 from the National Endowment for the Arts, on to \$1.3 million from the federal Economic Development Administration, and to larger anticipated investments in business expansion and improvement—the multiplier effect of Fernandina's revitalization effort is impressive. On completion, the Fernandina project is expected to show once again how aesthetics and economics can reinforce each other in contributing to the vitality of urban communities, both large and small.

